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# **BELLE PLAINE, IOWA**

**1862-1962**



**Jumbo Well**

**CENTENNIAL HISTORY BOOK**







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Swales, Jean Newland

Belle Plaine, Iowa, 1862-1962.

Centennial history book. [Belle Plaine  
Century Corp., Burrows Pub., 1962]

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BELLE PLAINE, IOWA

## A HISTORY

1862-1962

COMPILED IN CONNECTION WITH THE  
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION  
BELLE PLAINE, IOWA

JULY 1, 2, 3 and 4, 1962







Panoramic view of Belle Plaine taken in 1872. At the left is the round house, and the Tremont House. At the right may be seen the first Methodist Church and the Evangelical Church. View taken from hill in South City Park.

## Chapter 1

**Backward, Turn  
Backward, O Time,  
in your Flight . . .**  
—E. A. Allen

When we look at Belle Plaine today it is hard to believe that if we had stood on any of the nearby hills 100 years ago we would have seen prairie grass as high as our shoulders. It is equally hard to believe that the beautiful trees which grace our streets and parks were planted. The only natural wooded areas were along the rivers and creeks. Deer were plentiful; wild-fowl were everywhere; the streams were a fisherman's paradise. The railroad had just barely succeeded in laying track this far.

Tiny settlements like the Belle Plaine of that day sprang up; some thrived; some withered. Some have left no trace of their existence except an occasional brick or stone turned up in the field

when plowed by the farmer who cultivates the soil where once stood houses, businesses, churches. The settlements which survived bear the marks of rapid growth. Some of these towns survived fire and flood; some lived through disappointment and discouragement. Those which had the will to live and grow stand today as a monument to the hope, prayers, and determination of the hardy pioneers.

We hope to tell the story of the early years of this area in the pages that follow. Countless men, women, and children had a part in the early struggle for survival. We could not hope to give a complete record of all who contributed to the community life which we enjoy today. We can only draw upon the sources extant. Telling the history of the early years is a monumental task, a task which could and probably should involve months of preparation. We shall try to give the reader some conception of the joys and sorrows, the achievements and disappointments, and the dreams and realities which were and are part of our heritage. We approached the task with great hopes and very little

experience in such matters and finished it with the sure knowledge that our capabilities are too limited and time is too short. Still, our research was fascinating; the acquaintances made were rewarding; the arguments indulged in were a spur to further work, and best of all, the co-operation and interest of the whole community were an inspiration to all of us.

We offer the finished product humbly, and with the hope that it will please many, if not all.

## Chapter 2

### **Early Days of Guinnville and the Beginning of Belle Plaine**

George Washington (Kern) Ealy was a man who lived through some of the most interesting early years of our state and city. Many people liked to listen to what he had to say about those early years and most people who came to hear him left reluctantly. Here was a man who had seen and done things the rest of us dream of seeing or doing.

How fortunate the young people of today would be if they could hear first hand this man recreate the thrills of those early days as he remembered them. For Kern Ealy was a man with a fantastic memory and a gift for storytelling which enabled him to enchant the listeners, young and old.

Kern's remembrances are the basis of this article and were set down by William Lahn, Kern's son-in-law, who knew that the time would come when the teller would be gone and the tales would be but memories to those who had heard them. We have not changed the wording, except for clarification, and have re-arranged the material to a



1864 view of Main Street looking east. At left is Hart House, an early hotel built by Samuel Hart on the northeast corner of Eighth Avenue and Main Street.





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**George W. (Kern) Ealy.** Mr. Ealy died in January of 1959. His son-in-law, Bill Lahn, died in July of 1960.

slight degree for continuity. The tale is Kern's and is set down by his son-in-law so that all of us might have the joy that comes with sharing a good tale, well told. This is the way Bill Lahn told it:

"I plan to tell in the following the early history of Belle Plaine as my father-in-law, George Washington (Kern) Ealy, remembers it. He was born June 12, 1861, in Bald Knob, Missouri, and came to Belle Plaine in the summer of 1865 and has been in the vicinity ever since. I became his son-in-law in 1917, and in the years since then he has told me stories about the early days. I didn't realize until last year what a remarkable memory he has. About a year ago I found a History of Benton County in the Belle Plaine Library, compiled in 1878, and on pages 443-53 I read a number of incidents about which Kern had told me years ago. One in particular stands out. Kern told me that he and John Donovan were herding cattle west of Salt Creek, north of the tracks. There were no fences then. Boys had to herd the cattle to keep them out of the cornfields, and all the cattle in the neighborhood were herded together. The people who lived on the Ham Edwards place (now owned by E. A. Tappan) at the northeast edge of town sent their boy down to get their cattle out of the herd. He was on horseback and drove the cattle across the creek. When he crossed the creek the horse stumbled, and threw him off, and he drowned. The 1878 History of Benton County relates that Franklin Schild drowned in Salt Creek about Sept. 23, 1869. When I read this I asked Kern if he remembered the name of the boy who drowned and he

said he couldn't. Then I asked if he remembered what year it was and he said he couldn't say for sure but he did remember that it was the first year he had a pony of his own and when he got off he couldn't get on again unless he found something to stand on such as a stump or a log so he couldn't have been very old. He was eight years old in 1869.

Another account in the 1878 history about which he had told me was the time he and his dad brought a load of hogs to town and sold them to a stock buyer at the yards which were then on the south side of the track about a block west of the Seventh Avenue crossing. Before they left the stockyards the buyer dropped dead. Kern couldn't remember the buyer's name or the exact date but he said it was cold weather. The 1878 history tells that E. B. Severn, a well-known citizen of Belle Plaine, died suddenly at the railway station on November 17, 1871, while superintending the loading of some stock on a car. Kern was then 10 years old.

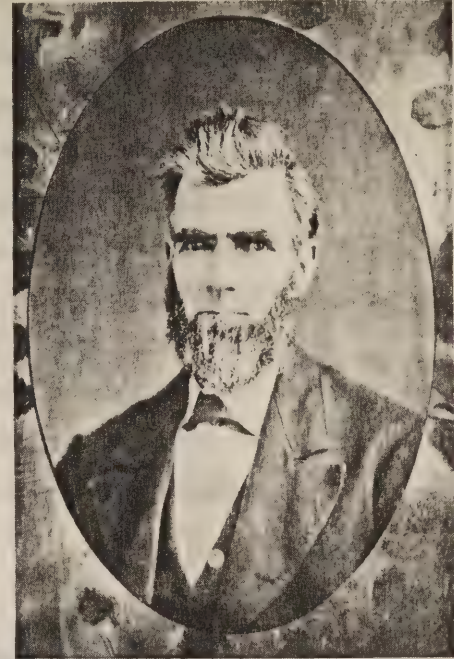
Nearly all the tales in this 1878 history had been told to me over the years by Kern. When he couldn't remember the exact date he would tell about other events which happened before or after so that I could usually figure out the year. I asked Kern how he had acquired such a remarkable memory and Kern said he didn't think it was remarkable. He had heard so many stories told and retold as a youngster that it would have been more remarkable if he hadn't remembered them. He had more opportunity than most boys to hear stories.

When Kern was about 12 a co-operative store called the Grange was organized by a group of 100 farmers. Kern's



**Malvina and Washington Ealy,** parents of George W. (Kern) Ealy.

dad either managed the store or worked in it until it burned in the fire of 1894. Kern enjoyed being around the store helping his dad. All the farmers in the vicinity met there and sat around talking and arguing. Near the stove there was one chair reserved for Hyrcanus Guinn. Whenever Hyrcanus appeared the occupant of the chair moved. Every evening Kern's dad entertained the family with the stories he had heard during the day. Kern's dad was what we would call the credit manager for the store and it was his business to find out everything he could about anyone. He knew where everybody came from, he knew what they did; he knew their reputation. During the winter, especially on Saturdays and Sundays, there was usually a group around the stove in the store. A lot of the conversations were about politics. Hyrcanus Guinn always held some county or township office and was well versed in politics, both state and national.



**Hyrcanus Guinn,** first settler in Iowa Township.

At about the same time that Kern was picking up tales at the Grange store his brother, Bill, was a bartender in the basement of the building on the southeast corner of Main and Eighth Avenue. If the owner was gone Bill would let Kern come in and stay with him. Kern said he picked up countless tales there.

Hyrcanus Guinn was one of the outstanding men of the community at that time and Kern knew all about his early experiences. Guinn was born in Greene County, Tennessee, in 1820 and died in 1890. Greenville was the county seat of Greene County. Guinn's father was in-







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In 1929 we moved to the store now occupied by Leonard's TV. We expanded in 1930 to the building directly west, then occupied by a men's clothing store, and an archway was cut between the rooms. In 1937 we bought the two buildings at 810 and 812 Twelfth Street. A glass front was installed and a wall removed between the above two rooms in 1939 and we occupied the double store. Overall new self-serve fixtures of latest design were installed in 1959. In 1962 we bought the building which had housed Connor's Store to the east of our double room. An archway was cut between Connor's and our double store in 1960, giving a three-store front with a total width of 70 feet. All of these improvements have been made to better serve our customers.







terested in politics and held several offices in Greene County, and he had a special friend named Andrew Johnson. When Hyrcanus was a young man he entered politics and took an active part in Andrew Johnson's support of Van Buren for president in 1840. In 1842 Andrew Johnson was elected to the Congress of the United States from his district. When he returned from Washington in 1843 he told such glowing tales of the new Territory of Iowa that Hyrcanus decided to go and look it over.

He came by horseback through Kentucky, southern Indiana, Illinois, and crossed the Mississippi River at Burlington. From Burlington to Iowa City the road was as good as any he had travelled, but from Iowa City west it was little more than a trail along the south side of the Iowa River. Where South Amana stood in later years there was a trading post run by a man named Patterson who traded with the Indians. This was the only building he saw west of Iowa City. Hyrcanus followed the river trail until he came to the hills southwest of Belle Plaine. He didn't favor the hilly country so he crossed the river where the land looked better. He came back east a few miles and when he saw the ridge east of here with plentiful trees and the prairie grass between the ridge and the river as tall as his horse he chose that place for a new home. He marked a tree on the south side of the river so that he could find the same place on his return.

Guinn returned to Tennessee, worked and saved his money, and in September of 1846 he married Miss Melissa A. Dunwoody. These two, with John Guinn, a doctor by profession, bought oxen and two wagons and started for Iowa in the early fall of 1846. Hyrcanus and his brother, John, voted for the first governor of the State of Iowa. They were on their way here and arrived in Iowa City on Election Day in 1846. The city was crowded because of election. When they told the officials that they were on their way to settle in Iowa they were allowed to vote and both voted for Ansel Briggs who was elected first governor of the state.

The road west of Iowa City had not been much improved. At the old trading post they found a couple named Hutchinson. The Guinns stayed there overnight and the next day arrived at Mar-engo where there was a man who ran a ferry across the river and had the post office in his home. At the present location of Koszta a man named Hench had three log cabins and he called the place Hench's Settlement. Hench told the Guinns that two men, William Greenlee and Robert Furnas, had been through there a month or so earlier and had settled about two miles north of Koszta on



**This is thought to be John Guinn, brother of Hyrcanus Guinn.**

Section One of Cono Township in Iowa County. These two men were brothers-in-law of the Guinns.

When Hyrcanus left in 1843 for Tennessee he had marked a large white oak. On his return trip in 1846 he found this tree and crossed the river there. He was about two miles east of the present location of Belle Plaine. Against the south side of the ridge they built a house of logs. A small stream fed by springs on the ridge ran near the house. The location was about where the Rene Arens home now stands.

November was spent in the construction of the log house and winter was



**Log house built by John Moller in 1862 which was on the farm Paul Raabe now operates.**



**Sawmill on John Kirner farm about 1880 or 1890. Man with dog is John Kirner. View is toward southwest.**

well underway before they had much chance to see the rest of the countryside. When they did get out they found a white trapper in a log house on the north side of the river about one-fourth mile west of where the city dump now is. The man was all alone and not too talkative. He didn't even volunteer his name, but he did give them some vegetables which he had stored in the ground, some dried pumpkin, smoked fish, deer meat smoked in the chimney of his fireplace, and he told them where to find a bee tree. They found enough honey to last them through the winter and Hyrcanus Guinn used to say that they wouldn't have made out nearly so well if it hadn't been for that trapper. Guinn was never able to thank him properly because when they returned in the spring the man was gone, never to return.

In the spring of 1847 Hyrcanus and John Guinn went about two miles east and two miles south of their location to see how the Greenlees and the Furnases had stood their first winter in Iowa. There John met Miss Caroline Goodwin who was a niece of Mrs. Furnas. In the fall of 1847, since the trapper had not returned to his cabin near the river, John tore the cabin down and built a new one. In 1848 he and Miss Goodwin were married at the home of Robert Furnas by Andrew Meachan, a justice of the peace. This was the first marriage in Cono Township.

In the spring of 1850 Major Wood of the regular Army encamped on the north side of the Iowa River about a mile east of where John Guinn lived. There were two companies of Dragoons and a detachment of Infantry with Majors Olmstead and Johnson. The camp was called Buckenough. It was used as a base for supplies being hauled from the Mississippi to Fort Dodge where a stockade was being built. The Army set up a saw mill along the river and the men cut trees and sawed them into lumber which was sent by ox team to Fort Dodge. The Army offered to buy all the





# IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS.



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1862



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— Belle Plaine —





logs the Guinns could bring in. Guinns had cut plenty of logs for houses so they sold a good many to the Army. The camp was there three or four months. When they were ready to leave they owed the Guinn Brothers enough that the brothers were able to buy the saw mill which the Army didn't want to take along.

The Guinns moved the sawmill to the approximate location of the present Seventh Avenue and Third or Fourth Street. The ground is higher there and was out of danger of high water when the river flooded. That was the starting point of Guinnville. In later years John Guinn bought a steam engine for the saw mill and hauled it from Davenport by oxen.

The river road was the oldest trail or road through this country. The main road east and west went along the south side of the river through Marengo and Koszta to the four corners south of Belle Plaine. A mile west of the four corners was a settlement called Dover, laid out by Adam Hall. Dover had a hotel, a general store run by Jim Guthrie, post office, blacksmith shop, and two brick kilns. Some of the early families were Winslows, Wrights, Blinkinsops, Ridenours, Craigs, Duffields, Sumners, Davenports, Boyles, and Ainsworths.

About a mile north and a little west of Dover is the spot where the four counties (Benton, Iowa, Poweshiek, Tama) join in a common corner. Levi Ruhl (Whitfield Ruhl's grandfather) lived near there and was a justice of the peace. It was very fashionable in the old days for couples to be married standing on the four-county corner. Levi and his brother, Andy, were considered the strongest men in that area. Kern said that he saw Levi pick up a barrel of salt and put it in a wagon. Andy went west every summer and worked in the gold mines in the Black Hills.

The road which came north through the site of Belle Plaine led to Irving which was a fair sized settlement and had an academy. The road went north of Irving about two miles where it



**Family of Francis M. Greenlee who came to Guinnville in 1855. From left, first row: James, Josephine, Mr. and Mrs. Greenlee, Laura, Talbert; back: Jack, Mollie and John.**



**Family of William S. Guinn taken in 1881. From left, first row: James, Hester, Mrs. Guinn, John S., Alice; second row: Alpha, Emmaline, Penelope and Mahala.**

joined the old stage coach route from Cedar Rapids to Toledo.

In 1852 Andrew Johnson, a close friend of Hyrcanus Guinn, was elected Governor of Tennessee. He insisted that Hyrcanus come for the inauguration in 1853 so Guinn took his family with him back to Tennessee. There he told his family and friends about the opportunities in the new state and these people considered a move to the west. In 1855 they gathered twelve wagons, oxen, horses and mules and with families and possessions started for Iowa. The families who came to Guinnville at this time were: William S. Guinn and his wife, Mary (Greenlee), and five children, Andrew Jackson Guinn and his wife Catherine (Farner), and six children, Francis M. Greenlee and his wife, Emmaline (Guinn), and three children, George

Washington Ealy and his wife, Malvina (Greenlee), and seven children (Kern's family), Andrew Jackson Ealy and his wife, Elizabeth (Greenlee), and two children, James R. Ealy, James R. Catron and his wife, Isabella (Lauderdale), and one son, John B. Greenlee and his wife, Elizabeth (Lauderdale), and two children. There were 18 adults and 25 children in this wagon train. When they arrived the sawmill was in operation and lumber was available to build houses.

John Guinn and Alex Suslong were partners in the mill at this time and lived a little south of the mill. James Ellis was a blacksmith and wagon maker and his home and shop were on the corner of Sixth Avenue and Fourth Street. John B. Hancox ran a boarding house north of the sawmill. James Miller had a general store between Fourth



**View south down Eighth Avenue from the railroad tracks.**







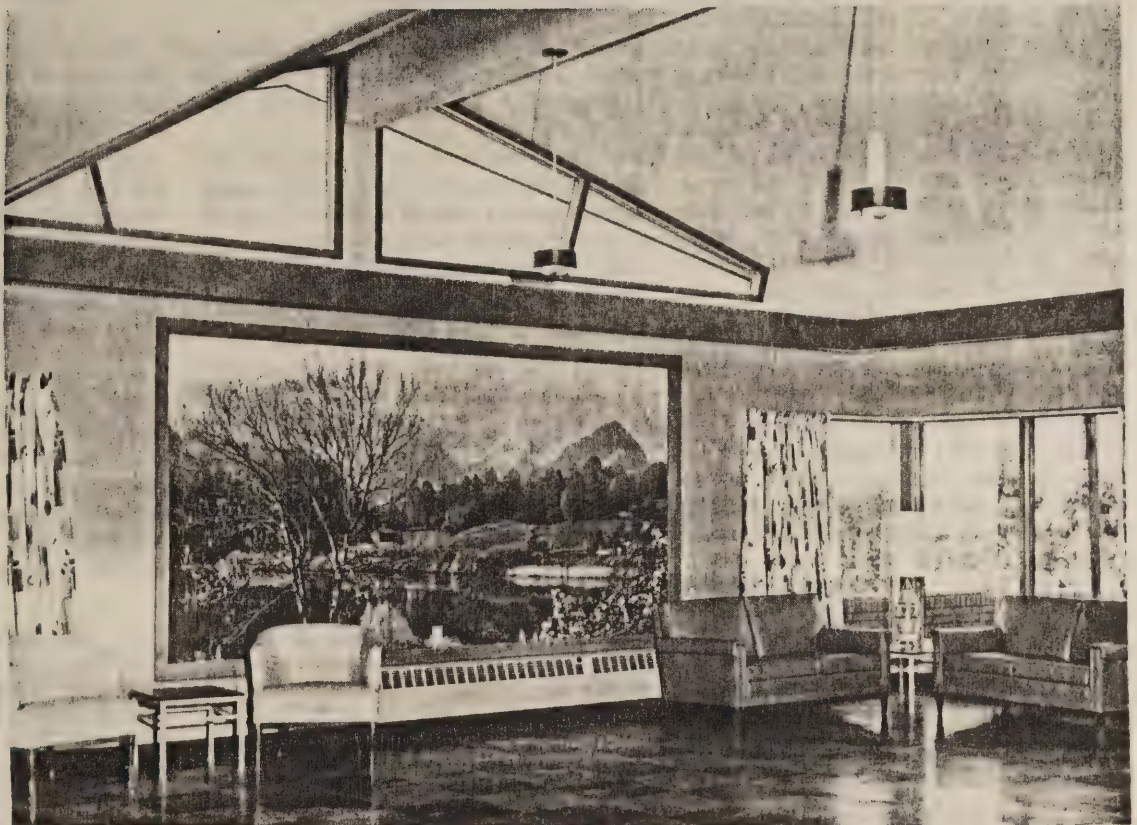
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Belle Plaine, Iowa







**Family of E. M. Ealy taken in 1892. Mrs. Ealy was a daughter of William S. Guinn who was a brother to Hyrcanus and John Guinn. From the left, front: E. M. Ealy, Thurman, Alpha Ealy; back row: Mary, Bill, Clara and Douglas.**

and Fifth Streets on Seventh Avenue. Henry Faye was a carpenter and his home was about where 312 Fifth Street is now. J. W. Filkins owned 160 acres that lay between what is now First and Eighth Streets and Seventh and Thirteenth Avenues. He was a well educated man and when he came to Benton County from New York State in 1850 he was appointed county surveyor. His house burned in April, 1873, and a valuable library burned with it. The house standing there now was built later (Jim Pech's). There was a ten-acre grove of trees around the house called Filkins' Grove where all the gatherings and picnics were held.

With the seven families who were here and the eight who came from Tennessee there were enough to request a post office. The post office at Guinnville was established in 1856 with John Guinn as postmaster. Guinnville was surveyed on October 30th and 31st, 1856, by Wesley Whipple, and was a part of the Northeast Quarter of Section Thirty, Township 82 North, Range 12, West of the 5th P. M. The plat of Guinnville was filed for record November 8, 1856 by John E. S. Guinn and Caroline Guinn. This part of Section 30 was what is now bounded by Seventh Avenue and Fourth Avenue on the east and west, and Sec-

ond and Sixth Streets on the south and north. Belle Plaine's Fourth Street was Guinnville's Main Street. A school house was built on the corner of Fourth Street and Sixth Avenue and it served as meeting house and church as well as school.

In the fall whenever it got cold enough to freeze the meat, everyone brought his hogs or herded them to the William Guinn farm which was located west of Belle Plaine along Salt Creek. There was a fine sand bar on the west side of the creek where all the butchering was done. The smaller boys and girls carried wood and brush for a fire in which rocks were heated, then placed in barrels of water to heat the water enough to scald the hogs. This community butchering was a big social event and would sometimes last for two weeks. The timber along Salt Creek was full of hanging carcasses cooling out. Men kept watch during the nights to keep wild animals away from the meat. Any surplus meat could be sold at the store for \$1.50 a hundred. Carcasses were stacked in a shed at the store until a load could be hauled to Iowa City, stacked in boxcars and shipped east.

Nearly all of the people who lived in and around Guinnville were from Greenville, Tennessee, and most of



**Guinnville school in 1902. Left to right: Orville Pettitt, Martha Pettitt, Neta Pettitt, Geneva Pettitt, Viola Pettitt, and John Pettitt.**

them had relatives and friends still in Tennessee. The new settlers wanted someone from here to go and urge their friends and relatives to come to the new land of opportunity. In 1860 Kern's father undertook the trip with his family. Kern's family led a group from Tennessee to Iowa in the spring of 1861. They came by way of Arkansas and Missouri because their wagons were of a wider guage than those from the north and east which had worn trails farther north. The wider wagons had difficulty with the narrower roads so the southern route was taken. The settlers were in northern Arkansas when the Civil War broke out. Kern's father enlisted with the 3rd Arkansas Cavalry and served for the duration of the war. Those who were too young or too old to enlist went as far as Bald Knob, Missouri, where they waited out the end of the war. Kern was born there in 1861. After the close of the war Kern's father returned to his family and they made their way to St. Louis, came by boat to Clinton, and from there to Belle Plaine by train. When they arrived here, they had their home waiting for them. In 1867 they moved to 80 acres two miles west of Belle Plaine, in Section 25 of Salt Creek Township. From that time until his death, Kern Ealy lived in or close to Belle Plaine."

Kern's story of early Iowa Township and Guinnville brings us up to the first years of the town of Belle Plaine. How did it start? What happened to Guinnville? We will try to answer these questions with accounts from other early settlers and pioneers.

#### **I Remember . . .**

For the next part of our history of Belle Plaine, we turn to other stories related by pioneer residents. Set out hereafter are some personal remembrances of the earliest settlers of our community taken from the February, 1895, Union Annual Supplement. Only excerpts which seemed most interest-





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Southwest corner of Eighth Avenue and Twelfth Street, where C. W. Gore, who came here in 1867, located. W. Dana Ewart was in business with Gore. Ewart patented the improved drive chain which founded an industrial empire, Link Belt.

ing to the writer are used. The first is written by a Col. B. Wilson who was with a party of land hunters who stopped overnight with the family of John Guinn in the fall of 1849. "I remember how cordially we were treated . . . and how Guinn told us that the Indians were his most social neighbors and how the Indians shared venison and buffalo meat with the settlers. He had to go to Cedar Rapids to the mill and Iowa City was the nearest point where groceries could be purchased. We went up into Tama County, looked up some land, were some three days gone, and came back to Guinn's to get a square meal. We ate heartily although his wife was away visiting. When the morning came such a breakfast as she gave us: splendid biscuits, coffee, fresh meat and pure sweet milk. They were averse to receiving any pay. I selected a piece of land west and south from where Belle Plaine now is and two years later moved to it, after having built a cabin . . . Belle Plaine is one of the best towns of its size between the big rivers. Her business men are gentlemanly and accommodating, her officers kind and firm, her preachers earnest and eloquent, her lawyers terse and forcible, her printers wide awake and truthful as may be, her politicians earnest and anxious, and her people generous and sociable."



House of E. S. Johnson, early attorney in Belle Plaine, located on corner of Oak Street (Seventh Avenue) and Washington (Eighth Street) from 1875 atlas.

Peter Spracklen wrote about his early experiences: "I came to Tama County in the fall of 1852 . . . I returned to Mount Pleasant where I had left my wife and upon our return stopped near Marengo which consisted of three or four houses and a stage route inn on the road from Iowa City to Fort Des Moines . . . We took dinner at Guinnville with John Guinn, and later the same year I stopped over with Guinn for about a week. During that time I went deer hunting and followed a deer a little west of Belle Plaine . . . I was taken by the land and landscape and later decided to leave my former claim and purchase the area I had seen . . . We arrived here in January of 1853 and boarded for a while with John Guinn, paying \$4.50 a week for myself, wife, child, and brother, Solomon . . . My brother and I squatted on two eighths, one on the east, and one on the west side of what is now called the county line road but is a half mile this side of the line . . . In the spring Solomon put up a smithy . . . and this log cabin was the first habitation ever put up by a white man on the ground—now within the corporation limits of the city of Belle Plaine. Richard Postlewaite and his sons, William and Joseph, lived in a cabin two miles east. John Guinn was the sole settler on the river bottom in this neighborhood. To the west was William Beabout and to the north was Robert Arbuthnot. No other settlers were found nearer than 12 miles up Salt Creek . . . so Spracklens were in the center of a four-mile prairie. Malory Morgan was the first man to come within the now corporate limit; William Postlewaite was the next to come. He entered the place afterwards secured by Presley Hutton and upon

which the original town of Belle Plaine is located. Henry Boody came in 1854 . . . the first child born was Ella, born to Peter and Maria Spracklen in July, 1854. The child died in infancy . . . Iowa City and Cedar Rapids were the market places and families clubbed together and hauled enough to last six months at a time. When W. A. Parris came to this locality, he hired out to the Spracklens."

F. M. Greenlee wrote about his early days: "I arrived here in November, 1855, and lived for a time with my wife's brother, Hyracanus Guinn, and in the spring moved into a log cabin across the road, and in 1857 to Guinnville, founded by John Guinn. Guinnville consisted of three or four log cabins. When the Rock Island was brought to Marengo we thought it only a short distance to market. In 1861 the North Western began grading and I helped grade . . . wild turkeys were plentiful and it was not unusual to see 20 or more deer in a herd. Indians were thick and not inclined to be friendly, although we were not molested."



Sherman House, early hotel, from 1875 atlas.

Henry Boody wrote: "I came in 1855 and soon after bought 80 acres at \$2 an acre and \$14 an acre for timber



The Burley House, located on the west side of Eighth Avenue just south of the tracks.







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723 12th Street, Belle Plaine, Iowa





land which was much more valuable than prairie. (The area he bought would be approximately from the Country Club road west to Seventh Avenue, south to Fourth street and north to Sixteenth Street.) The nearest sawmill was at Koszta and I cut timber from my Buckeye land and hauled the logs to Koszta. I broke the prairie and planted wheat which was hauled to Iowa City and sold for 40 cents a bushel. We traveled by ox team and it took three days to make the trip. In 1859 the Cedar Rapids and Missouri River Railway (predecessor of the C&NW) commenced grading and I worked for \$2 a day with my cattle . . . We raised 20 hogs and drove them to Buckeye and received \$2 per hundredweight. Times were hard; money loaned at 20 per cent and was hard to get even at that interest per year."

William Parris tells his story now: "In 1856, Benjamin Parris, my father, followed me to Iowa and bought from Solomon Spracklen 200 acres which would be bounded by Seventh Avenue and Eleventh Street, county line road and the line of the corporation limits on the north. After making the purchase he returned to New York leaving me here. Except for Guinnville there were just four habitations on the spot now covered by our city corporation. All were log cabins, with the puncheon floor of the frontier. No nails were used in putting them together, but they were pinned and tied by poles. Mallory Morgan had a cabin 10 by 12, with hay roof and mud stopped chinks; Henry Boody had his cabin; William Postlewaite had his cabin on the exact spot where the Greenlee opera house was burned last summer (this would be about in the middle of the north side of Main



**Mr. and Mrs. William White.** He built the first house in Belle Plaine and the first store building and was the grandfather of George White and Effie Cleckner.

Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues), and there was Peter Spracklen's place. I worked for William Postlewaite and many a night lodged in the cabin on the hillside."

Samuel Hart's narration follows: "I drove through what is now Belle Plaine on the way from Koszta to Irving in 1857. At Guinnville I found John Guinn and F. M. Greenlee. On the original Belle Plaine site naught was visible but the cabin of Postlewaite, the next nearest being that of Ben Parris. In 1859 I entered business with Levi Marsh at Irving. When the railroad missed Irving, Presley Hutton, a resident of Irving, bought the quarter section which William Postlewaite had entered from the government, which adjoined that of Parris and is that land now bounded by Oak Street on the west, the Selden property on the north, the road east of the creamery on the east, and Sherman Street on the south (Seventh Avenue, Eleventh Street and Thirteenth Avenue). The patent had never been secured and it had fallen into the hands of a speculator in Iowa City. When Mr. Hutton bought it, to ease

the claim of Postlewaite, he deeded him a strip of land 100 feet by 180 feet in size, which strip would now be bounded by Beech Street (Eighth Avenue) on the east, the alley on the south, Second Street (Thirteenth Street) on the north and Dr. Worley's lot on the west the 180 feet running east and west. On this tract Mr. Postlewaite, who was obliged to give up his comfortable log cabin, built himself a frame shack on almost the exact spot where the fire of 1894 originated . . . I sold out my Irving interests and bought a lot from Mr. Hutton on the northeast corner of Beech Street (Eighth avenue) and First Street (Twelfth Street.) On this corner I built a hotel in 1863 (Hart House) and continued to run it until 1871."

William White added these observations: "I came to this locality in 1861 . . . My first act was to circulate a petition among the farmers to raise money to start the town here and not at Plaquemine. In the fall I built a building on the east lot now covered by Guthrie Auditorium on the northeast corner of Ninth Avenue and Twelfth Street. I built the first bridge across the Iowa River, of the corduroy type, which was used for some time. I built the first frame house in the new town. Main Street was a very muddy place indeed but the town grew very rapidly in 1864 and its solidity was established."

### Chapter 3

## The Arrival of the Iron Horse and the Establishment of Belle Plaine

Belle Plaine has always been known as a "railroad town." The arrival of the railroad was the reason for its existence. It grew because of the railroad; it declined as the railroad withdrew; it survived because it had the will to sur-



View of Main Street looking east from Eighth Avenue, probably taken in the 1870's.





# Congratulations To Belle Plaine

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1886 view of Twelfth Street from Ninth Avenue intersection looking west.

vive. It will grow again with the hard work, encouragement, and co-operation of its people. The years from 1862 to 1872 brought settlement of the prairie, permanent establishment of the town, and the beginnings of commerce and culture. These accomplishments all had their origin in the coming of the railroad.

In order for the Cedar Rapids and Missouri River Railway Company to retain grants of land given by the government, it was necessary that railroad track be laid to a point 40 miles west of Cedar Rapids by January 1, 1862. This point was at Plaquemine, a few miles across Salt Creek, west of Belle Plaine. The company which was in charge of construction was strongly in favor of locating a station at Buckeye and a spur had been built there with the intention of constructing a station but the desired concessions of land could not be gained from Hyrcanus Guinn and the Mall brothers, owners of the land. A representative of the company, W. W. Walker, came across the deep cut and met Presley Hutton and Benjamin Parris who agreed to give 40 acres to establish the station at Belle Plaine. The deal was closed. Mr. Hutton reserved to himself ten acres around his cabin and this ten acres has been the source of everlasting trouble. It divides Blair's original plat and Hutton's Addition in the middle of the Turnbull Block about where Garling's Furniture Store now stands. The original grant given by Hutton and Parris, was divided in the center by Seventh Avenue.

The naming of the town is described in a letter from John Hutton published in the Belle Plaine Union's 1946 State Centennial issue.

The July 18, 1946, edition of The Belle Plaine Union gives the following account of the naming of Belle Plaine:

The incident of the actual selection of the name of Belle Plaine for the city is related in an old letter written May

21, 1928, to Mrs. Gladys Anderson by the late John Q. Hutton, son of Presley Hutton, who was present at the time the town was named. This bit of history as related in Mr. Hutton's own words follows:

"Two weeks before the town site was named, the same party were at a dinner with my people that would gather two weeks hence to select the name, and in the meantime names were to be the question before all present. I recollect there were about five or six persons in the party. Quite in earnest was the discussion with father's family regarding names, and many were the names suggested, and discarded.

"The day of the actual naming arrived, and the party put in a prompt appearance, and since the dinner was good and the day beautiful everyone seemingly was well pleased. I, as a boy of 16, was alert and listened to the conversation with a boy's interest.

"To avoid the commonplace run of names was the paramount object. The five or six interested railroad men, father, mother and my sister walked out in front of the farm house. The view up and down the Iowa River from the elevated plateau was beautiful that early summer's day. One of the party walked

off some distance, stood there, and presently returned with a smile and I believe he at once remarked 'I have it,' of course meaning a name, and he spelled it out 'B-e-l-l-e P-l-a-i-n-e.' It caught the approval.

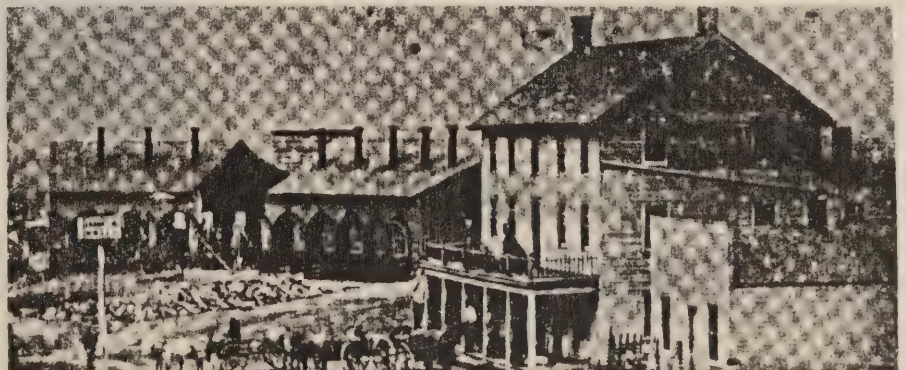
"W. W. Walker, the only person that I now positively remember, made the suggestion that the ladies should now decide from the names suggested. They had eliminated many of the names that had been brought up, as only a few had been thought appropriate, and the ladies were to pick one from among them. However, none was really considered after the wonderful suggestion that had been made and which was, in our opinion, an inspiration.

"My sister and mother were in no doubt as to the heartfelt desire of all that the name should be 'Belle Plaine,' and they made the decision without hesitation. I think it is likely that my sister, Rebecca Hutton, gave the decision.

"The day's work ended with the best of good feeling. The balance is history."

Many of the early citizens moved here from Irving when it was seen that there was little hope of ever getting a railroad connection to that town.

The area which Presley Hutton gave for the site of Belle Plaine had originally been entered from the government by a William Postlewaithe who had built a log cabin on the claim. He had failed to prove up his claim, however, and it had fallen into the hands of a speculator in Iowa City where the U.S. Land Office was located. When Presley Hutton bought the quarter section he deeded to Postlewaithe a strip of land 100 by 180 feet in size to ease the claim of Postlewaithe. Mr. Postlewaithe had built a cabin on the land originally entered by him near the corner of Seventh Avenue and Main Street and he was obliged to give this up. On the tract given him by the Huttons he then built a shanty on the spot now occupied by the Lincoln Cafe. The location of this shanty was destined to become a landmark. In 1894 the great fire, which burned nearly all



Tremont House on the northeast corner of Seventh Avenue and Twelfth Street, also called Franklin House and Blossom House.







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BELLE PLAINE, IOWA





of the business district and threatened to destroy the town, originated on that very spot.

One of the railroad's reasons for locating a station at Belle Plaine was the difficulty of grading west of here where the Salt Creek bottoms are swampy and boggy. Attempts to make a fill across this area were at first unsuccessful since the material used for the fill disappeared almost as fast as it was dumped. The railroad construction company finally reached Plaquemine, the coveted spot 40 miles west of Cedar Rapids.

It is said that the company, in order to extend the railroad to this point and hold it's government grant, merely spiked the rails at the ends and moved the cars over them by hand, as they dared not put an engine on the track.

An old saw mill stood at Plaquemine on what was then known as the Parks farm.

Belle Plaine grew faster than its founders dared hope and the value of the land along the railroad probably prevented the laying of a town square such as those found in so many of the towns which grew up about this time.

In the fall of 1861 William White built a storeroom on the northeast corner of what is now Ninth Avenue and Twelfth Street and a man named Crider occupied this building. Crider put in a stock of goods but the next two years were so unprofitable for him that he was sold out by his creditors who took possession of his goods and sold them at auction and divided the resulting cash as the law provided.



**Selden Tailoring Shop, 1890, at the northwest corner of Eighth Avenue and Twelfth Street.**

John I. Blair, a railroad magnate, platted Belle Plaine, consisting of 13 blocks, on April 24, 1862, and the plat was filed and recorded on May 13, 1862. Blairs Addition was platted on April 17, 1865, filed April 19, 1865, and covered Blocks 14 through 21. Hutton's Addition to Belle Plaine was platted August 26, 1863, filed and recorded Sept. 29, 1863,

by Presley Hutton and this Addition is the one which has caused difficulties in abstracts in that area ever since. G. F. Kirby was the surveyor of the town of Belle Plaine.

John I. Blair was apparently much opposed to liquor, and in deeds given by John I. Blair and Ann Blair, his wife, the following provision usually appeared: "Upon this express condition, however, that no spirituous liquors of any kind except for medicinal purposes shall be sold upon the premises, and upon a breach of this condition, the said grantors and their heirs may re-enter said premises and hold the same as of their former estate." This restrictive clause was later released, probably because of the difficulty it caused in



**Mr. and Mrs. Tom Lawrence. He was one of the early businessmen who had a great deal to do with the growth of Belle Plaine.**

passing title to the real estate.

In the fall of 1861 a building was erected for a saloon but the proprietor was advised to and did remove the shanty from the platted town and began business close to town.

In the fall of 1861-62 I. N. Isham built another store building, occupied by H. H. Smith. George Lowe completed a grain warehouse about the same time. The first dwelling, after the town was platted, was built by William White in the spring of 1862 and Mr. Forbes, who was clerking for Mr. Crider, built the second dwelling. Soon afterwards a house was moved to the plat of Belle Plaine from Guinnville and during the summer and fall of 1862 several other houses were built.

James Ellis started a blacksmith shop during the summer of 1863. The first postmaster was D. C. Forbes who had his office in a shanty about where the Coast to Coast store now stands on the south side of Main between Eighth and Ninth avenues. The first sermon was preached by Elder Holland, a Christian minister, in the fall of 1862, in the Crider store which was then va-

cant. Two small schools were taught in the winter of 1862-63, one by Mrs. Greene, and the other by Mrs. Pillbeam, whose husband was at that time pastor of the circuit of the Methodist Church. Dr. Crawford, the first doctor, came to Belle Plaine in 1863 and Drs. Cox, Mc-Morris and Cook were other pioneer doctors. The latter three were still in practice in 1912 when Belle Plaine was 50 years old. In the fall of 1863, as nearly as can be determined, the businessmen of Belle Plaine were as follows: James Ellis, blacksmith, E. G. Brown, successor to Isham's general store, Andrew Hale, grain and stock buyer, James Smart, lumber dealer, Carter Buckley and George Watrous, grain buyers, J. B. Daniels, harness

maker. William Shaffer was the first station agent.

At the close of 1868, there were seven general stores, eight groceries, four implement houses, three hardware stores, five lumber dealers, two furniture stores, three drug stores, one book store, two hat shops, five tailors, six doctors, six attorneys, two jewelry stores, one music store, four wagon shops, four blacksmith shops, three hotels, one livery stable, nine saloons, four boarding houses, four shoe shops, three harness shops, two auctioneers, one flour mill, one planing mill, two painters, one bakery, two dozen carpenters, one tobacco store, five drays, five insurance agents, one newspaper, several grain buyers and three dentists.

Belle Plaine was incorporated in 1868 and took its charter as a city of second class.

The first bank was started in July, 1869, by S. L. Bardwell of Chicago, and afterwards became the Citizens' National, then State Bank.

A musical convention was held in Belle Plaine in September of 1869, conducted by a Prof. Palmer of Chicago.





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Belle Plaine, Iowa

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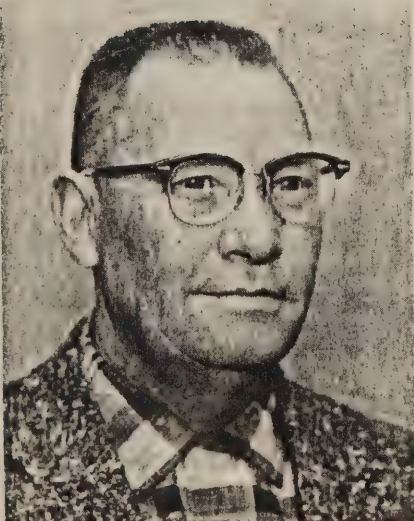
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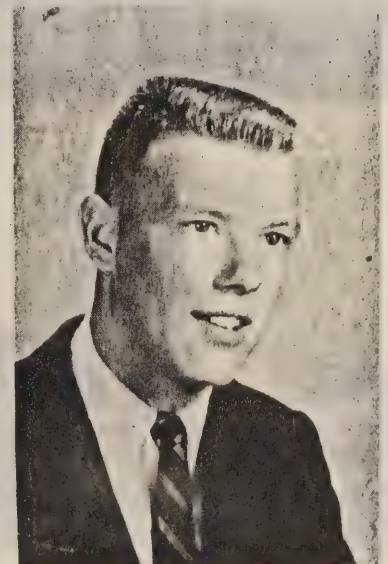
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In 1870 a peat bed was discovered on the farm of Peter Spracklin near Belle Plaine, covering about 30 acres and about 10 feet deep.

During 1870, 1,029 car loads of grain were shipped from the Belle Plaine station.

The second bank in Belle Plaine was the First National Bank, organized in May of 1872.

The first serious railroad collision occurred in the deep cut east of Belle Plaine in July, 1872, between a helper engine and the caboose of a construction train. Seven men were killed.

The first serious fire seems to have occurred on April 2, 1873, when the fine dwelling of J. W. Filkins was destroyed and his valuable library consumed.

In 1883 the south branch railway to southern coalfields was built and Belle Plaine seemed secure as an important point on the Chicago and North Western Railway.

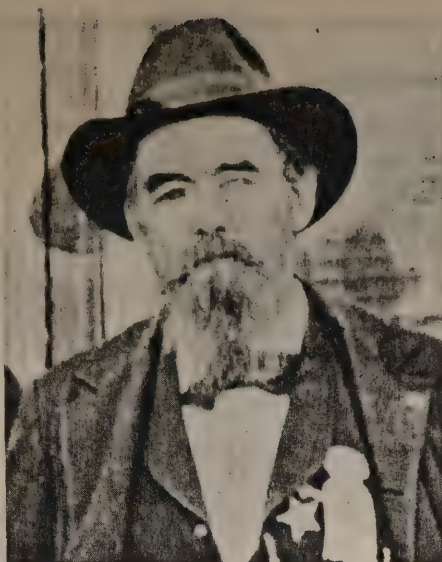
#### Chapter 4

### Belle Plaine's First Mayor's Recollections

In an article preserved by Abbie Winslow, D. A. Kennedy tells of the early days of Koszta, Guinnville, and Belle Plaine. When Koszta began to decline, Mr. Kennedy moved to Belle Plaine, where he taught in the newly organized school along with Miss Rachael Cupid in 1865 and the same year he became the town's first mayor.

Mr. Kennedy was postmaster at Koszta, and kept the office in his store. He failed at the merchantile enterprise, largely due to the era of wildcat money during the presidency of Buchanan. He farmed and taught school in Koszta, and when the Civil War began he joined the 28th Iowa Infantry. He tells of his trip to Iowa City to report as follows: "We took the train to Iowa City, arrived there on time and reported at headquarters for muster; we were sent before the board of examination. Seven doctors stripped us of every article of clothing and put us through more antics than any yankee horse buyer would ask to have a horse exposed to, but we all filled the bill and were sworn into the service." Kennedy and six others from Jefferson Township enlisted at the same time and all returned except Milton Bateman.

He returned from the war to find his wife and family living in Dover, and the country around being rapidly settled: "The wild prairies were being dotted by settlers making good improvements . . . and where I had traveled from 7 a.m.



**D. A. Kennedy, first mayor of Belle Plaine.**

to 4 p.m. from Black Hawk county south without seeing a habitation or sign of humanity, the land was being taken by the Germans, the Salt Creek Hills were being burrowed into by the Bohemians like moles to the meadow. I moved into Belle Plaine in the fall of 1865 . . . in a small one story house just east of Presley Hutton's residence which stood on the block, on the southeast corner of which is now located the Citizen's Bank.

"After that I taught in the first public school in Belle Plaine. Miss Rachael Cupid was my assistant . . . Later I taught several terms in the Guinnville school house until forced by my health to give up teaching.

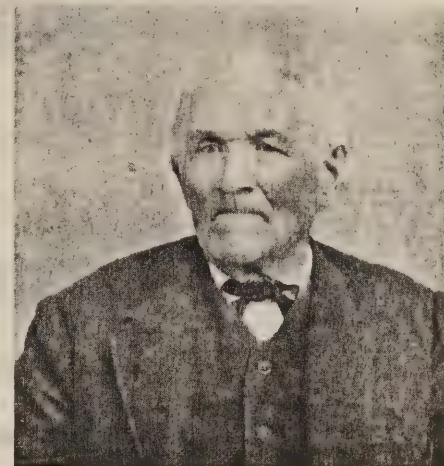
"I was also an active member of the pioneer Hook and Ladder Company . . . I have watched Belle Plaine spring up . . . and now I behold it a city of no mean proportions . . . I have never gone to bed hungry or suffered for the want

of proper clothing in Iowa, never have seen the time when Iowa did not produce plenty for support of her citizens and have something to spare to the destitute of other states. Always ready and willing to do a liberal part, she stands today the pride of the Union. And now with three cheers and a tiger for Iowa, hurrah for old Koszta, and bully for Belle Plaine."

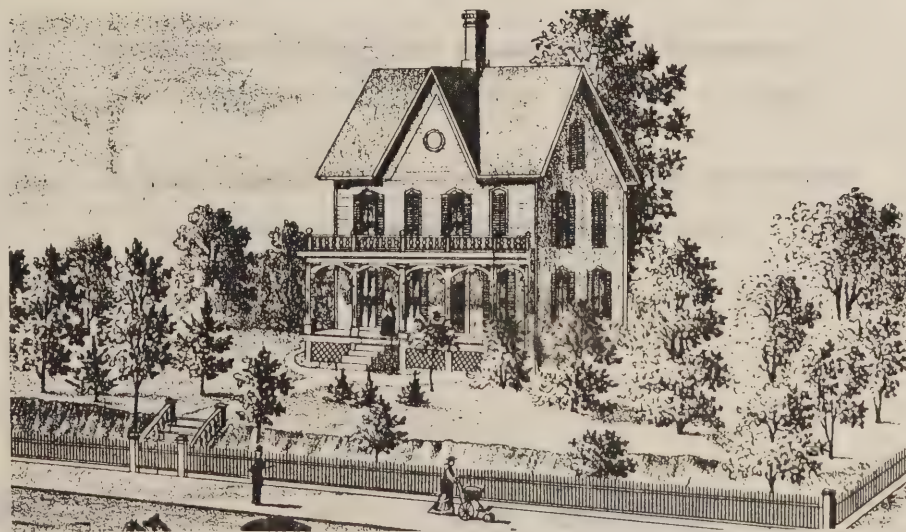
#### Chapter 5

### Early Day Settlers at Walnut Creek

The Walnut Creek early settlers included Brewers, Parks, Ruhls, Blinkensops, Dixons, Duffields, Sumners, Davenports, Boyles, Ainsworths, Winslows, McLennans, and Leimberers. An interesting diary kept by Daniel Winslow during the years 1876-81 tells of the community and people. In it are all the



**Daniel Winslow**



**Presley Hutton home on Front (Twelfth) Street, from 1875 atlas.**







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details of pleasant rural living, the joys of birth and the sorrows of untimely death, as well as an account of the social activities of family and community. A few of the entries from the diary are reprinted here:

"Jan. 22, 1876—A big show in Belle Plaine to be seen. I went and saw it and it was a big bore just like all other shows."

"Aug. 26, 1876—Cold and bright, sun shone. I found a bee tree today—good for a man 73 years old."

"July 4, 1877—Had a celebration at Belle Plaine and rockets at night. The young folks had a shake foot at Cal Cohails last night."

"May 15, 1879—I hauled two hogs today and sold them for \$2.75 per 100 lbs. Weight 470 lbs."

"June 25, 1879—I went to my hooks this morning and had a very large catfish on one of the hooks and taking him out he got off the hook and back in the water and I said some hard words. I caught some more small ones and set the hooks again."

"July 14, 1879—People are cutting wheat now and the chinch bugs and sickle have a race for the advantage. I went to town today with 16 dozen eggs sold at 7 cents per dozen."

"Oct. 14, 1879—I went to election and voted a straight Republican ticket. Mr. Malcom lost one of his little girls last Saturday with diphtheria and she was buried yesterday."

"Oct. 28, 1879—An old Indian called today. Asked for smoking tobacco. Lit his pipe and left."

"Sept. 23, 1880—Frank England threshed his oats today. Mrs. J. Williams got apples today. I went to my fish hooks this morning and found three catfish fast on them. One weighed 3 lb., one 4 lb. and the other 10 lb. Good for a man 77 years old."

"Nov. 6, 1880—Republicans had a



Engraving of "Lone Tree Farm" belonging to H. W. VanDike of Kane Township, taken from 1875 atlas.

jollification last night at Belle Plaine over the election (Garfield)."

Daniel Winslow (1803-1893) was the grandfather of Frank Doughty (1856-1927) who had a dry goods store in Belle Plaine. Many of his relatives live in the community today.

#### Chapter 6

### History of Irving

The village of Irving lies partly in Benton County and partly in Tama County. It was one of the early Benton county towns and was platted October 10, 1855.

Prior to the building of the Chicago and North Western Railroad, Irving was a trading center of considerable importance. Before the railroad crossed the Mississippi, Irving was a link in the chain of trade between east and west and supplied wagon trains and early pioneers with supplies on

their long trek across the North American continent. As one author said, "What a railroad surveyor's transit can do to the future of a thriving community!" When the railroad was built three miles south of Irving the community had reached its peak and thereafter declined, while towns fortunate enough to have rail connections, grew.



E. E. Blake, early historian of Belle Plaine and surrounding area.

The first class of the Methodist Episcopal Church was established in 1857 with the Sam Hutton family, Mrs. Martin Smith, Mrs. Betsey Travis, Nancy Blair, Mr. and Mrs. Washington Benson, Adelia Jackson, A. Shevils, Mrs. John Travis, Hattie Royce and Mr. and Mrs. E. Grubbs. A church building was erected in 1864 with J. G. Wilkinson as pastor and dedicated in 1866 with M. A. Barnes as pastor.

Restitution Church, A Society of Adventists, was organized in 1872 or 1873 and a building was erected in 1874. In 1875 the Irving Lodge was organized.

Irving was known as a "seat of learning" in the middle west. Irving Institute was the first institution of higher learn-



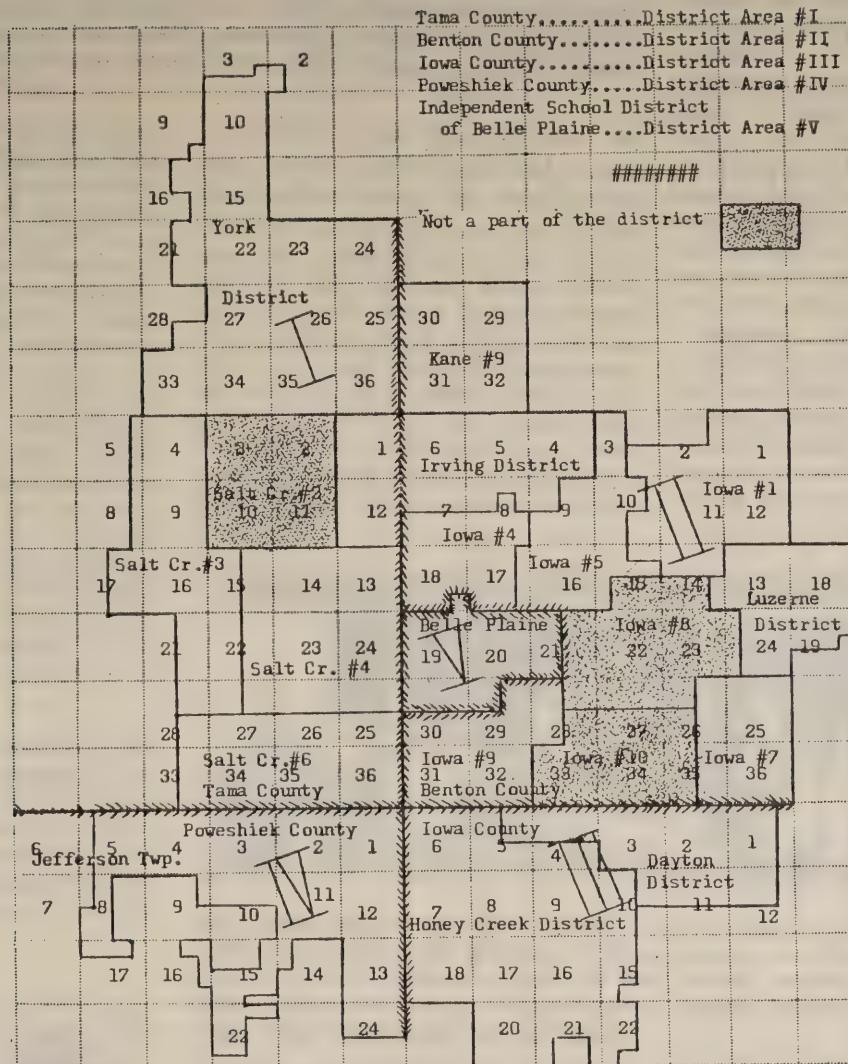
Log home of Jonathan and Malinda Shields England in Poweshiek County. Left to right: William, James, Martha, Mr. England, Luvena, Arthur, Mrs. England, Otho (who was born in this house), Mary and Bert; standing in back George, John, Marion and Thomas. Taken in 1887.





# BELLE PLAINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## District Director Areas



Reorganization

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July 1, 1961







**Elberon Band which substituted for the Belle Plaine Band on the Fourth of July, 1912, and played in this vicinity for many years. Left to right: Jim Novak (kneeling), unknown, Frank Uchtyl, Otto Grimm (kneeling), Charles Pecenka, Charles Homolak, Jim Shanda, Ed Novak, Frank Ewen, John Shanda, Albert Fullmer, Stanley Josefik and Joe Petrak.**

ing in this area. With donated labor and money a brick structure was built in 1862 to furnish a high school education to both boarding and day pupils. At this time Irving was a town of some five or six hundred people. Reverend A. Sawin, a Baptist minister from Massachusetts, was the driving force behind the school and had the whole-hearted support of Levi Marsh, George S. Williams, J. M. Yount, Andrew Hale, S. W. Hutton, T. G. Arbuthnot, Martin Smith, Samuel Miles, I. R. Compton and E. Thompson. The school opened in Marsh Hall in the spring of 1862 and continued there until a brick structure was finished in 1863. Soon after the opening, smallpox claimed the President, Rev. Sawin. Mrs. Sawin and her brother, Prof. Lauren A. Scott, carried on the work until 1872 when Prof. J. G. Craven became superintendent.

There were many businesses in Irving: blacksmith shop, cooper shop, broom factory operated by the Weymer Brothers, Steffa brick yard, grist mill and a hotel. When the north-south railroad was built in 1900 a depot was constructed and a lumberyard and stock yard started.



**Railroad station and elevator at Irving.**

The Salt Creek Road became the main street. A few stores and a post office were started but soon closed and the streets became over-grown along the creek. Some people moved north to Elberon and others moved south to Belle Plaine. A few stalwart people still maintain homes in Irving. There is a combination service station-store to serve their needs and they commute to other towns for supplies. The Irving public school closed July 1, 1961, under the Belle Plaine reorganization plan. Nadene Dudek was the last teacher and had 21 pupils.



**1961 pupils and teacher of Irving School: left to right, James Purk, Peggy Davis, Loras Dvorak, Beverly Dvorak, William Lyman, Kay Purk, Sharon Lippincott, Connie Lippincott, Nancy Lyman, Nadene Dudek, teacher, Sheryl Davis, Ronnie Purk, Delbert Reinberg, Peggy Lyman, Connie Dvorak, Ralph Davis, Donald Purk, Terry Davis, and Michael Wauters.**

Irving was a lively spot with its political gatherings, picnics, and parties, and according to E. E. Blake, an old settler, it had its share of pretty girls. When he was young there was a saying, "If you want a girl, go to Irving." Much of this information has been taken from writings of Mr. Blake and Lou G. Roberts, a son of an early Irving resident.

#### **Diary of Z. T. Shugart**

The most absorbing hours of research and reading are without doubt those

hours spent poring through personal diaries kept by men and women who lived fifty and a hundred years ago. They describe the everyday events of living matter of factly. We read them in wonder and amusement. George Wilson, Elberon, provided the diary and journals kept by Z. T. Shugart who operated a drug store in Belle Plaine with his brother, Dr. K. D. Shugart. Z. T. Shugart lived in Irving and kept his diary during the early months of the year 1867 when he was over 60 years old. His brother, Dr. Shugart, left Belle Plaine in 1870 for California. Mr. Shugart was apparently a county supervisor for he describes trips to Toledo to take care of county affairs. With Mr. Wilson's permission we will print some of the most interesting excerpts from the diary and journal:

"Sunday, January 6, 1867—Sabbath came in clear, beautiful, and warm. Went to the M. E. Church. Heard some good singing. Listened to a pretty good sermon delivered by Mr. Kinet, and witnessed the dedication of the church . . . also listened to them two hours begging for money to pay for the same. About three thousand was subscribed."

"Monday, January 7, 1867—Clear but quite cold and chilly. Left Belle Plaine for Iuka (Tama). About 400 soldiers on the cars bound for the Indian country. Went to Toledo and met with Board of Supervisors and was appointed chairman of the committee on the poor."

"Tuesday, February 12, 1867—36 de-

grees above. Cloudy, but warm and thawing. Went to Toledo and drew \$250 bridge money. Returned to drug store in evening. Trade dull. Rained steady all night. The waters pretty flush with mud a-plenty."

"March 5, 1867—Clear all day and pleasant. Still in drug store. Trade very good. Some time in the forenoon M. T. Shugart was called to Dock Coxes and sometime in the night Mrs. Cox had a fine daughter."





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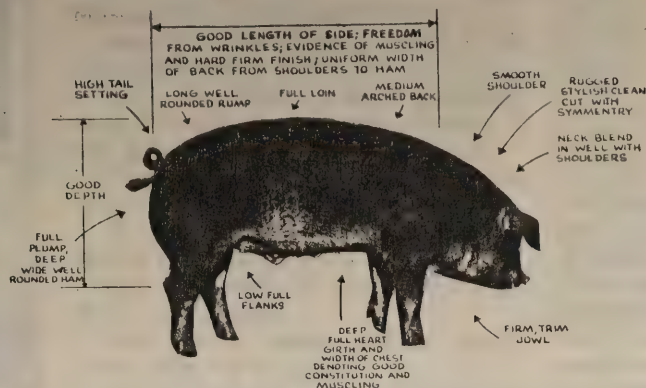
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Algona  
Carroll  
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MEAT



F. J. RILEY  
Manager

HOME OFFICE Phone CY 4-2411 ALGONA, IOWA

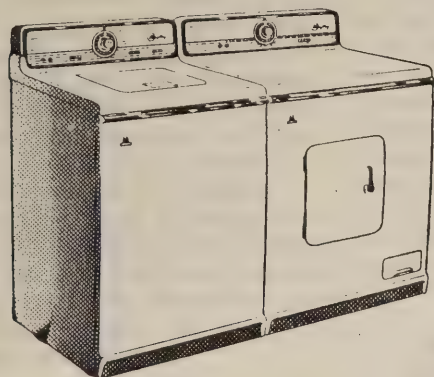


MEAT TYPE HOG  
1932 — 1962

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MEAT



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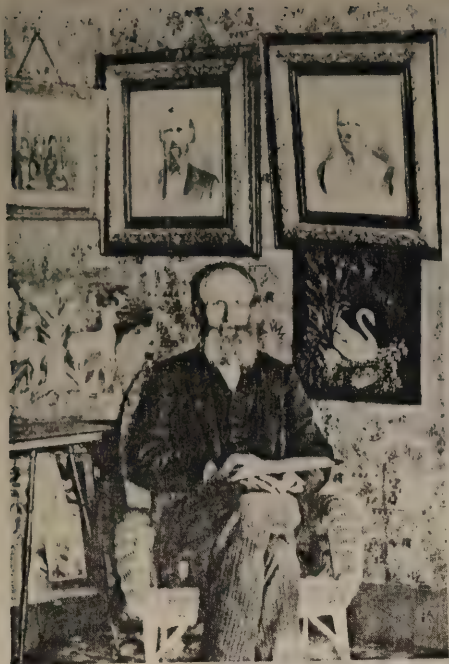
We Make Friends with Sales and Keep Them with Service

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Phone HI 4-2301







Levi Shugart, grandfather of Mrs. Ed Lewis of Belle Plaine, who homesteaded north of Irving in 1854. His parents, pictured behind him, were Quakers.

"April 19, 1867—Clear and pleasant, the boys plowing and myself doing chores. Susanna finished making soap and then made a kettle of hominy. I arranged her soap house and made some preparation for gardening."

"May 25, 1867—Clear and cool with some frost. Went to J. Weever's and bled a sick woman. In the afternoon L. H. and I finished planting corn."

"September 10, 1867—Clear and pleasant, went to Belle Plaine, took charge of drug store. First day of the B.C. Ball. There were five clubs met. Streets jam full of teams and a throng of people."

A journal kept by Z. T. Shugart for the years 1862-1880 gives a fascinating account of prices of goods and services for those years. Some entries are reproduced here to give the reader a small insight into the times.

1862—A coat \$12, hotel bill 60 cents.



Engraving of E. W. Stocker residence in Kane Township, also taken from 1875 atlas.

1863—Bottle castor oil 10 cents, thimble 3 cents, ½ lb. nails 4 cents.

1864—1 pint liquor 50 cents, 2 lbs. sugar 60 cents.

1865—Almanac 20 cents, car (railroad) to Iuka 85 cents, 2 bottles hair dye 50 cents.

1866—Pair specks 50 cents, dinner 15 cents, buffalo robe \$15.

1867—Temperance lecture 25 cents, Masonic ring \$1.50, 2 spittoons \$1.

1868—For making three shirts \$1.50, six collars 45 cents.

1869—Cherry bark 5 cents, sassafras bark 5 cents, shirt bosom 75 cents, 3 yds. calico 30 cents.

1870—Setting horse shoes 50 cents, dinner boarding house 25 cents.

1871—2 neck ties 75 cents, corset \$1, State Fair ticket 50 cents.

1872—Chestnuts 20 cents, silk hat \$6, Every-day coat \$8.

1873—Gallon whiskey \$2.50, gospel \$1.40, 3 barrels 30 cents.

1874—Pen points 5 cents, vinegar cruet 10 cents, mustard server 10 cents.

1875—Six qt. pan 30 cents, English currants \$1.02, Belle Plaine Review \$1.50.

1876—2 parasols \$2.70, tub and wash board 90 cents, 20 yds. carpet \$5.

1877—Candle wick 5 cents, fancy hat \$1.50, gold ring \$1.75.

1878—Medicine from Dr. Cox 50 cents, barrel salt \$1.60.

1879—1½ lbs. bologna 15 cents, sewing machine \$25, 3 toy guns 50 cents.

1880—Spelling book 35 cents, suit \$16.25, 2 blankets \$3, 5 lbs. beef 25 cents.

Mr. Shugart also made notations of moneys paid for livestock, amounts received for animals sold, wages paid for domestic help, (\$1 a day) and listed various amounts due for county matters. His handwriting is a marvel of legibility, and no financial transaction was too small to escape notice. It may be safely concluded that he was a man of



Home of John Cronbaugh, the original Cronbaugh in Honey Creek township, located where Helen Cronbaugh now lives. His seven sons were named Eli Whitney, Christopher Columbus, John Tyler, Martin Van Buren, Marian Francis, George Washington, and David Henry.

some erudition, since he made notations of many papers, books, and pamphlets bought. A March 29, 1878, copy of The Bellé Plaine Review, in the possession of Mr. Wilson, features an article written by Mr. Shugart entitled, "Death and the Resurrection."

## Chapter 7

## History of Koszta

In Section 14 of Honey Creek Township in Iowa County stands the village of Koszta. The township received its name when one William Taylor went bee-hunting and felled a bee tree into the creek and honey from the comb sweetened the creek water, hence Honey Creek. Before being named Koszta the village was called Hoosier Grove and the Hench Settlement. In March, 1864, William Hench settled in Honey Creek township and built three log cabins. In 1852 a tavern was erected on the east bank of Honey Creek and operated by Mr. Hench. In 1855 a sawmill was built and Mr. Sullenberger became foreman for the Hench brothers and added a grist mill. Samuel Huston, a wealthy man of the community, laid out the town and named it Koszta in honor of a Polish nobleman. The town has also been known as Kosta.



Sullenberger Mill, taken in 1899.

Among the early settlers were Lewis Lanning, Andrew Meacham, Eli Chase, Abner Wright and William Taylor. The stage coach line brought a thriving business to Koszta. There were three hotels operating fulltime: The Pennsylvania House operated by William Hench, the Barrack or Yellow Front run by Charles Hussy, and the Massasit opened by Mr. Kirkpatrick from Iowa City.

A number of deaths in the community brought about the opening of a coffin-making business. 120 coffins were made and 116 of them are buried in the Koszta cemetery.

The Koszta Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1845 and a





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TOM







**Ernest Sullenberger with Indian family in 1899.**

building was dedicated in 1860 with the Rev. John Harris and the Rev. T. E. Corkhill officiating. The present church was built and dedicated in 1901 and is served by Rev. James E. Selbert. Rev. Gordon Smith serves the Church of God in Jesus Christ south of Koszta on highway 212. Their Sunday School was organized in 1915 and was held in Koszta and Honey Creek Schools until their church building was dedicated in 1940.

One of the outstanding events that drew large crowds to the community was the old Koszta Camp Meeting. The meetings were usually held in August



**One of three former hotels in Koszta, the Old Yellow Front, now the farm home of Everett Denzler.**

and thousands of people from all over the state attended the two to three week Methodist evangelistic meetings. The ministers usually stayed at the Lanning home and others visited in neighboring farm homes or camped by the river.

The first school was built in Koszta about 1860 and taught by Coy and Ed Bale. The Koszta school closed in 1958 when the district reorganized with the Iowa Valley Community School District, Marengo.

Mart Coats was the founder of the Koszta cemetery. Lots are free to those living in Honey Creek township and \$40 to others. The cemetery is financed by township taxes and is one of the best kept in the state.



**Old Koszta Methodist Church built in 1860.**

In March of 1856, Hench and A. D. Stephens sought a license to build a bridge over the river. Permission was



**Early election day in Koszta. Left to right: J. W. Schroeder, Ed Randolph, Frank Randolph (boy), Eli Coates, Enos Zeigler, Dr. Dodd, Frank Sankot, Sr., Mr. Frazee and Wallace Kitcart.**

given and a 20-cent toll was charged. In 1916 a steel bridge replaced the first structure and in 1958 a concrete bridge was built.

The tragedy in the history of this little town came when the railroad missed Koszta and was built along Bear Creek rather than Honey Creek. Had it not been for that decision of the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific, Koszta might have far outstripped surrounding towns in growth. As it was the town dwindled until the post office was removed in 1924 and the last barber left in 1942. At one time Koszta had a justice of the peace and a constable and many trials were held in the store.

Built on a creek and only one-half mile from the Iowa River the community has been plagued by floods. The water reached its highest peak in 1924 and the most recent flood was 1958.

Still standing in Koszta are the combination tavern and grocery, blacksmith shop and sawmill, and Methodist Church. In 1962 there are approximately 12 houses in Koszta and the village is surrounded by rich farmsteads.

Note: Credit for most of the information in the history of Koszta must be given to Lynn Beyer, whose history of Koszta, which was published in the Marengo Pioneer Republican, was liberally drawn upon.

#### **Old Settlers Association**

The Old Settlers' Association which held annual meetings at Koszta was organized in May, 1893, by D. A. Kennedy, T. V. Clark, W. J. Guinn, Rev. L. W. Ruhl, W. A. Sullenbarger, and William Allen, all of Belle Plaine, and James







1894

1962

After the fire of 1894, Will P. Herring built the HERRING COTTAGE pictured above. It was operated by Will P., Jim and Ruth Herring for 53 years. The Hotel is now operated by Helen Dinnie, who acquired it in 1956.

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**JIM SHERWOOD, Manager**



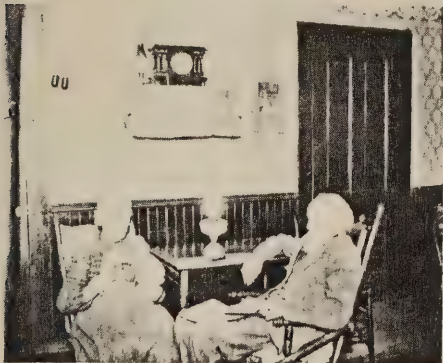




Family gathering left to right in rear: Mrs. W. J. Price, David White, Mrs. Worley, Aure White, Mrs. J. A. White, Dr. Worley, Mrs. David Sullenberger, J. A. White, Mrs. Charles White. Front: Lawrence White, Marjorie Price (Baker), E. L. Sullenberger.



C. C. Cronbaugh, Will Livingston, J. A. White, and J. T. Cronbaugh.



Rachel and Elijah Trueblood, taken in 1909. They came in 1846, ran a ferry with T. V. Clark, farmed southeast of Belle Plaine.

Patterson and J. M. Richardson of Margo. The first meeting was June 21, 1893 and D. A. Kennedy was elected president. The organization was called the Old Settlers' Society of the Iowa River Valley. Any person who had lived in Iowa for 25 years was eligible to join, officers were elected annually, and male members contributed 25c each to defray expenses of the association. Ladies were admitted free. This information comes from a carefully preserved program from the 1904 Old Settlers Picnic which belongs to Mrs. A. J. Koch of Belle Plaine. Mrs. Koch is the daughter

of Annie Rebecca Trueblood the first white child born in Honey Creek Township, Iowa County, and a granddaughter of Rachel and Elijah Trueblood, pioneer settlers in this area. Mr. Trueblood at one time ran a ferry across the Iowa River and did a thriving business, especially during the days of the California gold rush.

## Chapter 8

### The Town of Luzerne

The town of Luzerne owes its parentage to the Chicago & North Western Railway Company. In October of 1867, this company decided to abandon the Buckeye station and have one half way between Belle Plaine and Blainstown,



Early Luzerne street scene.

on the line between Iowa and LeRoy Townships.

On an inspection trip by the president of the railroad shortly after Luzerne

sprang up, the president asked if the town had been named. Upon receiving a negative answer he suggested the name Luzerne because of the beauty of the surrounding hills and valleys which reminded him of the city of Lucerne, Switzerland, a city he had recently visited.

The new town built up rapidly for two years. Some of the houses were moved from Buckeye. E. J. Ditzler erected the first store. In 1869 this town had 40 buildings, including a fine church and school house. About 20 persons were engaged in the following businesses: general store, hardware, meat market, wagon shop, tinsmith, blacksmith, grain elevator, lumber and coal yards, two hotels, livery stable, ice house, barber shop, dressmaking shop and at one time seven saloons. The population of the village was about 300, mostly Germans. Some of the early settlers were Conrad Tatge, Johann Grummer, Fred Wenzel, William Holst, William Greenlee, Henry Nichols and Andrew Stephens. The latter was a prominent local character, known as Andy Stein, the Indian interpreter. He was hired to take the Indians to the reservation at Tama and acted as contact man for them.

A. F. Tatge built the first elevator and John Shellenberger also bought grain. Since there was no other railroad in the vicinity grain was delivered to Luzerne from a distance of many miles. Other business men were Matthew L. Nismonger, Jacob Buch, William Rohbein, and John Jones. Later William Taege, a tinsmith, arrived and opened a hardware store with Henry Ilten. They were known as Ilten and Taege and became a very prominent firm, later moving to Cedar Rapids.



St. Paul's Band of many years ago. Left to right, first row: Ed Kettler, August Tatge, Gust Hellwig, Waler Grummer, Charles Waterman, Rudolph Studt, Ed Radeke, Teacher Schoenberg, George Kettler, Henry Mecklenburg; back row: Albert Shultz, Theodore Studt, George Studt, Fred Kettler.





**Chevrolet — Pontiac — Oldsmobile**

**Buick — Chevrolet Trucks**



**1938**



**1962**



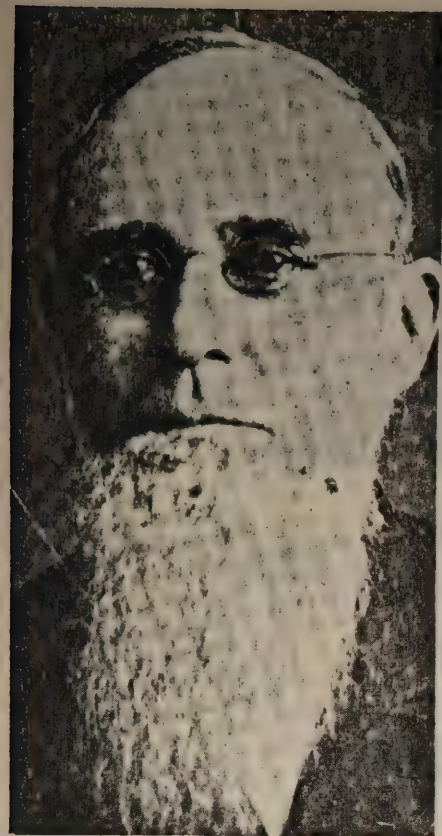
**One of Earliest Pontiacs**

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**The Rev. Phillip Studt, first resident pastor at Luzerne.**

Lutheranism in this area began about 11 years before the existence of the town. The first Lutheran sermon was preached in April, 1856, by Rev. A. Selle in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Tatge, one-half mile south of the present Luzerne. On May 22, 1859, St. Paul's Lutheran congregation was or-

ganized with 19 voting members. Some of the charter members were the Conrad Tatges, the Johann Wonraus and the Johann Grummers. There are grandchildren of these charter members who are present members of St. Paul's. In 1861 a small church was on the site of the present Lutheran Cemetery. The first resident pastor, Rev. Philip Studt, was installed May 10, 1866. The same year a Lutheran Day School, which is still in existence, was opened by the Rev. Studt. The original congregation which had dwindled down then began to grow. Many new families moved in and the following year, 1867, the town of Luzerne was founded. Present pastor of St. Paul's is Paul H. Eggold.

The Luzerne public school was built in 1870. There were two buildings, known as the little school house and the big school house. In 1890 the little school house was closed and all the classes were conducted in the other building. The present school



**Luzerne Public school which closed in 1961.**

house was built in 1930, and was closed in 1961 when the district consolidated with Belle Plaine.

The post office was established August 2, 1870. The first postmaster was Matthew L. Nismonger. He was succeeded by Andrew Shriver, Julius Studt and William Kouba, the latter serving for 43 years. The rural mail delivery was established in 1902. John Beem served as the first carrier for 18 years and was succeeded by Otis Wright who started in April, 1920, and continues to the present day.

The Farmers Merchantile was organized in 1906. Some of the managers were Herman Lorenz, George Lechtenberg and Adolph Roth. The Luzerne Savings Bank was built in 1908 and Martin Studt was the only cashier. It closed in 1932 but paid off its depositors completely.

The first automobile in this vicinity was owned by A. F. Tatge and was a 1907 Mitchell. The Tatges and the Martin Studts were frequently seen riding in this car. Several years later F. H. Kluss was also bitten by the car bug and bought a Thomas Flyer.



**Left to right: August Kluss in Thomas Flyer, Fred Kluss in 1916 Hudson, Martin Kluss in 1913 Ford.**

Luzerne had a number of serious fires. In 1879 the furniture store burned; in 1887 the Ditzler store, which had been moved from Buckeye, burned; and in 1889 the flour mill was destroyed by flames. The town of Luzerne was incorporated in 1895 and the viaduct was built in 1896.

In 1881 the Chicago Milwaukee Railway was constructed a few miles north of Luzerne and many of the business houses and residences were moved to the newly established town of Keystone.

At the present time, 1962, the town of Luzerne has eight places of business: Luzerne Motor Company, Stelling's Store, Donnan's Tavern, Froning Grain and Lumber, Koehn's Furniture (cabinet making and woodworking), Smith's Plumbing and Heating, Wehrman's Trucking, and a barber shop. It also has



**Fiftieth Anniversary of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in 1909.**







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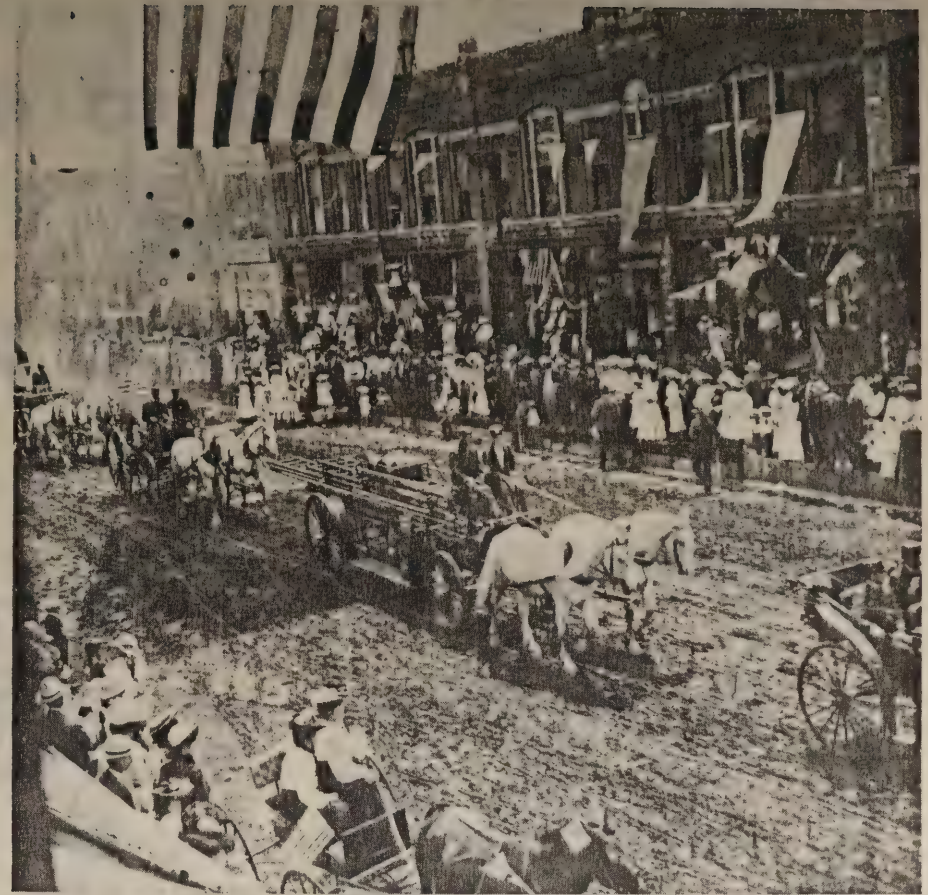
Farm scene, 1908, with John Krajicek, Emanuel Doupink, Frank Kouba, and William Mundil.

a post office, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, and St. Paul's Day School which has an enrollment of 56 pupils. The population at the time of the last census was 136. — Kate Koehn, Leora Saurteig and Oscar Schroeder.

#### Chapter 9

### The Belle Plaine Volunteer Fire Department

Throughout the years of its existence, one of the proudest and most valuable organizations of our city has been the volunteer fire department. It was organized June 24, 1873, when James Collister was elected foreman; C. H. Schnoor, first assistant; W. P. Tuttle,



1903 Fourth of July Parade with ladder cart, hose cart, and steamer behind.

second assistant; S. S. Sweet, treasurer; Tom Lawrence, secretary.

One of the first fires it was called up-

on to attend was that which started in the law office of A. F. Bell in July of 1874. The equipment consisted of one engine, one hook and ladder and two hose carts. Several buildings were burned before the fire was controlled and several others torn down to stop the progress of the flames.

Members are elected to each of the two companies and usually serve ten years when they may be considered exempt. Many serve longer and their service to the community is purely voluntary. They are called out in every kind of weather, day or night, holidays and weekdays. The fire may be a grass fire or a holocaust; it may take ten minutes or ten hours; the response is immediate. At the sound of the alarm each man heads for the fire or the fire station. Few people realize the devotion of the men to their duties and fewer still know the time and effort involved in restricting the losses from fire to the amount which gives Belle Plaine one of the most enviable records in the state.

There was a time when rivalry between the two companies, hook and ladder, and hose, was so great that hardly a friendly word passed between the groups, but fortunately this animosity did not prevail when the men were called upon to attend a fire. Then their co-



Silver Cornet Band and Belle Plaine Fire Department in 1880, with first ladder and hose carts. A. A. Selden and N. P. Selden are two of the firemen. Solly Wertheim store appears at left. View is toward the east along Main Street.

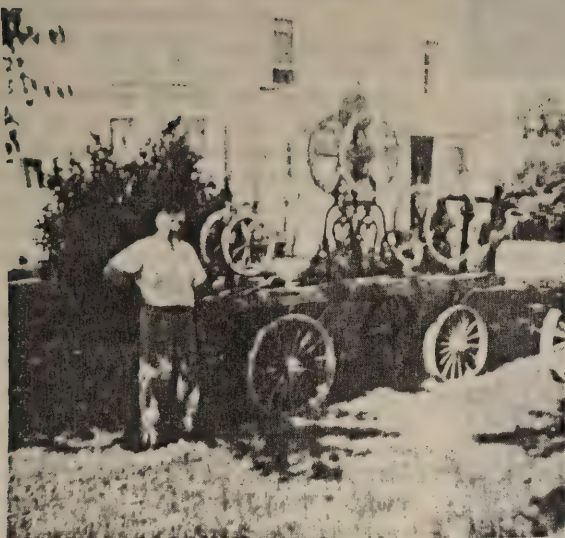




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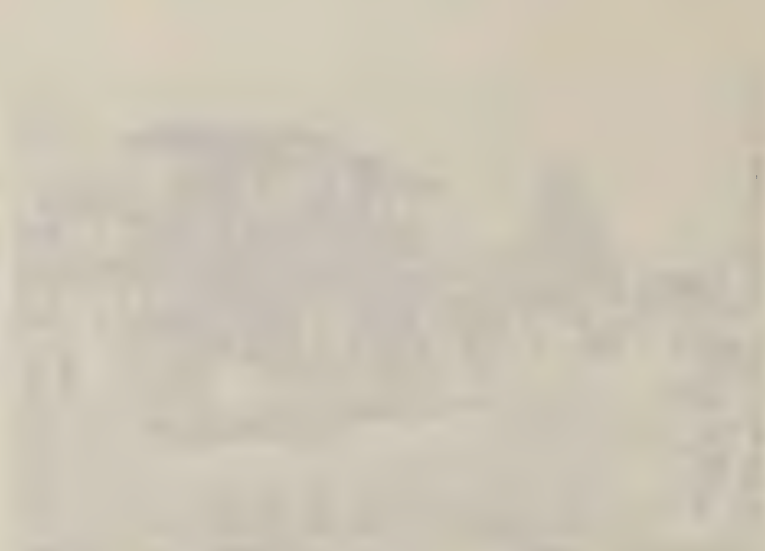
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Belle Plaine

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1952

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May 30, 1907, firemen and band.

operation was so complete that it belied the former frigid atmosphere, at least until the fire was out.

In 1880 property owners circulated a petition and presented it to the city council asking for an ordinance to prohibit the erection of frame buildings in certain portions of the business district in order to check the fire hazard and improve the appearance of the city. An ordinance to that effect was passed in December of 1880.

The city officials, headed by A. Hale, discussed the advisability of buying a fire engine, and after correspondence with several firms, they decided to buy a hand pumper engine and hose cart from the city of Marshalltown for the price of \$700. The outfit was delivered free by the railroad in January of 1880. A month later 500 feet of hose was purchased. The equipment was housed in a building on a lot leased from N. P. Selden for \$18 per year. The apparatus was placed in the care of Thomas Lawrence, acting fire marshall. Mr. Lawrence held the same position at the time of the fire of 1894.

In order to provide a meeting place for the fire companies and city council, the city purchased the property known as the Lovenberg place, for \$335. The city marshall and night watchman were delegated to keep the engine from freezing and to keep it in good order at all times. The cost of the new hall, built by A. H. Carney, was \$3,555.17.

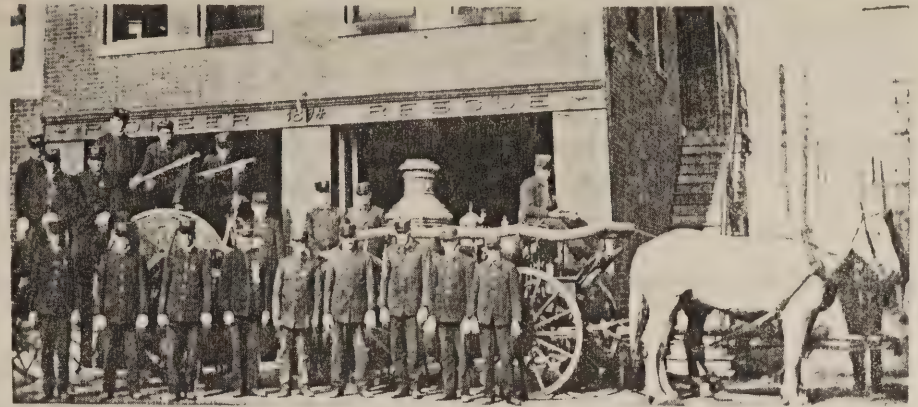
J. M. Coldwell was appointed fire marshall in 1883. In 1884 George Brand was elected engine keeper. J. W. Rucker was also fire chief for some time. Lawrence was re-elected in 1888.

In 1886, when Jumbo Well broke loose its control came under the responsibility of the fire and water department, and this control proved to be a mighty expensive headache.

In 1894 the fire department's equipment proved severely inadequate to control the great fire and immediately following the fire the council voted a levy of one mill on all taxable property in the city to help provide better protection. The council also sent a special resolution of thanks to all of the fire companies which had aided the local



Ladder Company on Decoration Day in 1910. Front row, left to right Art Byers, C. W. Burnham, William Franka, Fred Cerny, Dr. Collins, Edward Ewen, Charles Cerny, Emory Ortscheid, Frank Laquette, Dr. Hancock, Charles Pecenka; second row: Frank Riley, Grant Ealy, Joe Wheeler, Tom Lawrence, Henry Ortscheid, Joe Cerny; top row: Jason Livings, Thurman Ealy, Owen Rucker, Frank Firkins, Charles Sweet, William Winslow, and William Livings.



Hose Company in 1910. Front row, left to right: Bill Huron, Bill Frondl, Herb McMillan, Andrew Keyser, Joe Herbert, unidentified, Bill Catron, Frank Grossman, Jack Demory; top row: unidentified, Warren Wheeler, Joe Hadima, Frank Haloupek, James Madeson, Charles Madeson, Charles Wilcox, Tom Lawrence, John Zellers and George Harris.



1914 Firemen. Front row, left to right: Thurman Ealy, Warden Folk, William Brand, William Franka, Clyde Toennings, William Campbell, Art Dinnie, Jason Livings, Dr. Collins, Chief Tom Dodd, J. Decker, Emory Ortscheid, Frank Firkins, Charles Cerny, David Strachan, Charles Radeke and Dr. Hancock; back row: Fred Cerny, Frank Ewen, Art Nichols, Eugene Palmer, Oscar Guinn, Tom Riley and Ed Ewen.







# In 1895 Lawyers Could Advertise And They Did!

It is interesting to read the advertisements of the lawyers in the good old days. The South Slope was noted for its lawyers and they were a colorful lot. Here are some examples:

From an 1895 program for the  
Four County Fair in Belle Plaine:

Tom H. Milner, Lawyer

Office over First National Bank, Belle Plaine, Iowa

General Civil and Criminal Advocate. Loan money, Negotiate Mortgages; and am especially prepared for the perfecting of titles. I am ready day or night — Sundays excepted — to try a law suit. It is my Eden, and in it perpetual flowers bloom, for me. Better is a dry morsel and contentment therewith than a stalled ox with contention — Give me the stalled ox and clothes or I perish. To get them I must have business. References given. Always ready.

Leroy E. Cox

Attorney at Law and Conveyencing

Does a General Law Business and represents two of the largest and most Liberal Fire Insurance Companies on the face of the Globe. Office over Nichols and Marr's Pharmacy.

From a 1902 program of a minstrel show given by the Hook and Ladder Company of the Belle Plaine Fire Department:

Sid Milner and Father, Lawyers.

The Red Headed Legal Napoleon, etc. Freckled six months and Spotted the other six.

From a 1903 minstrel show program:

Tom H. Milner, Lawyer. The Old Red Head and the Red Headed Legal Napoleon. Get there !!

From the 1907 Belle Plaine Union:

T. H. Milner, attorney at law. Practice under the sign of Mars, god of war. Seldom licked, never surrender.

The newspapers and advertising were a lot more colorful in the "Good Old Days" and lawyers were permitted to take advantage of it. Now lawyers no longer advertise but the quality of service given by the Bar has not diminished.

Local Members of the Benton County Bar Association.

WALTER KOLLMORGEN

HAROLD J. SWAILES







**1916 Firemen.** Walter Malcolm was the newest fireman in the group. The truck was a Dart, bought in Waterloo. Front row, left to right: David Strachan, Jr., Charles Sankot, Lee Hoisington, Frank LaQuette, Owen Rucker, John Dinnie, Challen McCune, Walt Malcolm, Art Dinnie; back row: William Campbell, Charles Cerny, Warden Folk, Art Nichols, Fred Cerny, Thurman Ealy, Ralph Way and Tom Dodd.

department in fighting the flames. Solly Wertheim was the mayor at that time.

After the destruction of the city hall and firehouse, a contract was let to McInterr and Chermak for the sum of \$3,300 for construction of a new city hall, firehouse, and jail. The result of that construction was the present city hall, still in use after almost 70 years.

For many years the volunteers used horse-drawn equipment for fire fighting and whatever teams of horses were in the neighborhood when the fire bell was rung were promptly unhitched and commandeered to haul the equipment

to the fire. The first fire truck (motorized) was bought in 1916. The fire department at the present time has two trucks and the rural department also has two.

For many years it was the custom for firemen to decorate the graves of former firemen on the second Sunday in June. Formerly they were joined by the Odd Fellows and the Iowa Legion of Honor in carrying out this practice and the groups were sometimes headed by a band, making quite a parade to behold. The firemen still carry on a traditional decoration day for deceased firemen but it is held shortly before Memorial Day.

The city has always been "fire conscious" and this attitude perhaps explains the possession of a \$3,000 steam pumper which was purchased in 1881 from Ahrends of Cincinnati. The old steamer, still in the possession of the local department, has a colorful and proud history of service. Even after it



**Firemen's picnic, 1913.** (Top picture), front row left to right: Bill Winslow, Challen McCune, A. R. "Choppy" Nichols, Frank LaQuette, Thurm Ealy; middle row: Joe Pech, Fred Dawson, F. A. Miller, Fred Cerny, Bill Franka, Jason Livings; back row: Tom Riley, Henry Ortscheid, John Zeller, Warren Wheeler, Judge C. W. Burnham, Joe McPherson, W. W. Livings, Doctor Collins and Emory Ortscheid. Bottom picture shows same group of firemen at picnic, several hours later.



**Firemen marching to cemetery to decorate graves of deceased firemen, about 1910.**











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**REIHSEN'S PHARMACY** Belle Plaine







About 1920. Front row, left to right: Harold Hartman, Ralph Miller, Jay McGinnis, Ed Snyder, Walt Malcolm, Bill Campbell, Dr. R. L. Whelan, Dick Miller, Earl Byers; back row: Dave Strachan, Gene Palmer, Otis Park and Jimmy Moore.

quit fighting fires it was used for pumping out sewers in the city. Its most famous day of glory came when it was rushed to Cedar Rapids by train to help fight the Quaker Oats fire of 1905.

C. C. Ridenour, the steamer's former engineer, was a machinist for the railroad and he regarded the steamer as his personal responsibility. He worked on it constantly, keeping it in perfect working order. This tender care probably accounts for the fact that the steamer is still preserved in the local fire museum.

On the night of the Quaker Oats fire, Mr. Ridenour was called to the station at 8:15 p.m. and helped load the steamer aboard a flatcar, got an engine and

waycar, and headed for Cedar Rapids. Mr. Ridenour had just finished one of his periodic overhauls on the steamer and it was in perfect working order. On the way to Cedar Rapids, Mr. Ridenour and Harry Walton fired the boiler as they passed Luzerne and hung weights on the safety valve. Pressure was at 130 and 140 pounds although normally the steamer worked at 75 pounds of pressure. The records show that the old steamer was pumping at the fire at 9:20 p.m. and continued for 14 hours straight and a total of 21 hours before the fire was brought under control, and that it kicked water higher than any other piece of equipment at the fire. The steamer lived to fight many more fires, both here and as far away as Chariton. The department had ramps

built so they could load her aboard the train for out-of-town emergencies. She fought the great Belle Plaine fire of 1894 and survived, although other pieces of equipment were lost in that conflagration.

For over 30 years Earl G. Byers has headed the local department as chief. A great deal of the credit for the high efficiency rating of the local department is due Chief Byers. For many years he has devoted himself to training men and keeping the department ready for any emergency. The equipment includes up to date trucks and fire-fighting tools. A rural fire department is manned by local firemen.

In 1955 the local companies, after an offer of \$1,000 for the old steamer, decided to build a Firefighters' Museum to house the steamer and other antique equipment. Carpenter Ray Leavell donated his labor and others helped to make the museum a possibility, including Roger Pyburn, Roy McBride, Kenneth Schriener, Wilfred Drahos, Maurice VanHorbeck, Ray Koeppen, Leonard Adams, Charles Hazen, Kelly Vandivier, Russell Wiese, Sam Roudabush, William Carpenter, Jr., and Mike Hoover. The 22 by 30-foot building is located in the South City Park.

Of the early businessmen who served the fire department perhaps none will be so well remembered as Tom Lawrence who served the department for many years and helped guide its destiny in the beginning years of its organization.



1962 Firemen, left to right: Earl Byers, chief; Ray Koeppen, Achiel Cornelis, John Ulich, Sam Roudabush, Bill Carpenter, John DeCook, Charles Hazen, Roger Pyburn, John Chekal, Merlyn Niebes, Bernard Duhachek, Albert Beck, Norman Ehlers, David Fish, Wilfred Drahos, Maurice VanHamme, Wilbur Rusk, Charles Weaver, Leonard Adams, Edwin Siefken, Harold Daily, Russell Wiese, Sidney Weaver, Lester Anderson, Calvin Vandivier, Wayne Myers, Morris VanHorbeck, Clarence Fisher, Marshall Zieser, Robert Gillen, Lawrence Hoover, Hugh Gillen. Unable to be present at time picture was taken were: Lloyd Sindt, Richard Wright, Walter Mulherin, and Ronald Ealy.







LEFT: A. E. Feddersen opened Jewelry Store in the Hanson Bldg. (Now Strawhorn's Hdwe.) in 1895, at age 33; later he moved to present MILLER JEWELRY location, where he operated with his sons, Erle and Paul, until his death, 1949; continued by them until 1957.

## MILLER JEWELRY

RIGHT: Jack W. Miller worked as apprentice watchmaker under A. E. Feddersen, 1946-1949 — then studied watchmaking at Bradley Univ. School of Horology, Peoria, Ill. Opened his first Watch Shop off the lobby of Herring Hotel, 1951. Later location was in the Drahos Shoe Shop until purchasing the stock of Feddersen's and moving to present location in May, 1957.



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We haven't been here for  
100 years but neither have  
Automobiles!

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AND WE'LL FIX 'EM!

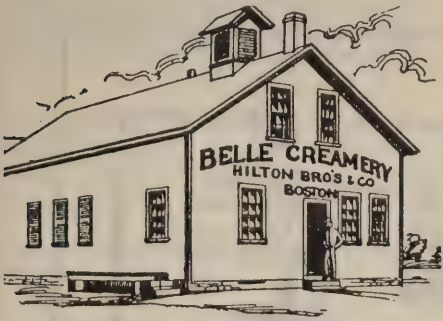




**"The Eighth Wonder of the World"**

Non-flowing artesian wells had been drilled on farm land as early as 1882 in the area surrounding Belle Plaine. One of the most productive was on the S. L. Bardwell farm (about one mile north of the present Belle Plaine Country Club) where a well two inches in diameter and 260 feet deep was drilled and water rose to 235 feet or within 25 feet of the surface of the ground. Jacob and William Wurtele had successful wells which were classed as deep wells.

In April of 1886, Hilton Bros. and Co. of Boston built a creamery here and when they dug their well, water shot into the air to a height of 53 feet. Citizens rushed to see the wonder; the news spread all over the state; people came to drink the water and all commented upon its peculiar taste.



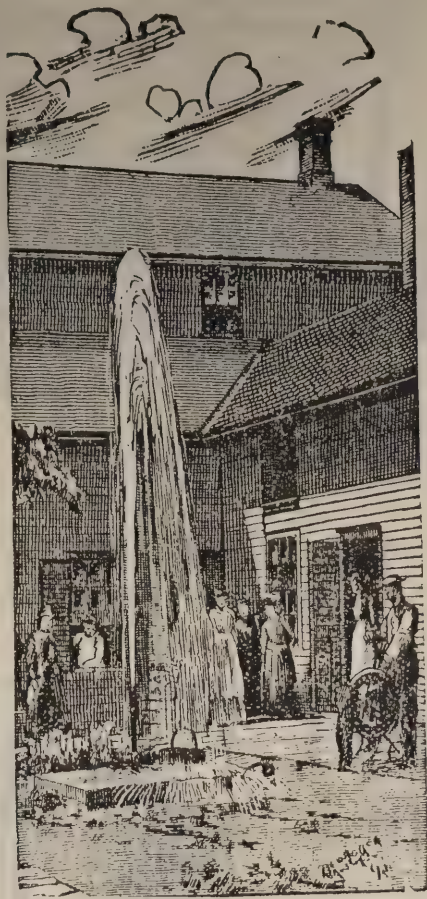
Hilton Brothers Creamery located where R. Johnson's garage now stands.

It was later discovered that these wells and the following ones came from the same vein, the only variation was in the height of the surface of the ground. On higher ground the water did not rise to the surface but only as high as the head (classed as a deep well) while where the surface of the ground was lower than the head, the water was thrown into the air to a height equal to the head, less friction and resistance of the air, thus making an artesian well.

Messrs. Hilton Bros. and Co., were delighted with their well and proceeded to have pipes placed in their work rooms to secure a continual flow of cold water circulating to keep the rooms cool and for other uses.

The city fathers realizing that the city of Belle Plaine needed adequate water, formed a stock company and drilled a well on a hill in the residential section (approximate vicinity of Eighth Avenue

and Fifteenth Street), but the water came to within only 2½ feet of the surface so it was planned to use a wind-mill and tank setup. After much delay the operation was begun but didn't come up to expectations and the committee decided to let the matter rest until other arrangements could be made.



Well at Tremont House, northeast corner of Twelfth Street and Seventh Avenue.

William Weir & Sons, who drilled the wells for the creamery and the city, moved their equipment to the Tremont House (Seventh Avenue and Twelfth Street) and proceeded to drill another well. The Tremont House was a hotel and a ready water supply was needed for guests. At a depth of 225 feet, water rose through a two-inch casing to the surface and then through a one-inch pipe to a height of 45 feet. It was a grand sight and people flocked to see it.

The photographers, Miles and Greenlee, took the first photographs that were ever taken of any of the wells, but from then on they and an amateur photographer, Mrs. William Smith, took photographs of the wells in their various stages.

The Tremont House well was centrally located and was used by many people

for drinking purposes. Some people who had suffered assorted afflictions, felt their health to be generally improved after drinking the artesian water. Many testimonials were given as to the curative powers of the water as follows: "kidney complaint: I can say that I have benefitted if not cured of kidney trouble by the Belle Plaine Mineral Water"—signed, George A. Hutchinson, Boone Dyspepsia: "For 30 years I have suffered with dyspepsia and its comitant troubles, and suffered much from nervous exhaustion. The use of the Belle Plaine Mineral Water has greatly benefitted me. Have not been so well in ten years."—signed, J. Baker, "for 20 years a busy merchant." And lastly, Belle Plaine, Iowa, Aug., 1886 . . . "Having inherited a bilious temperament, I have been compelled to take medicine for years, at least every 30 days, to remove bile and obtain relief from constipation and piles; since striking our Mineral Well last April 30, I have used its water exclusive of all other drinks, and since that time found myself perfectly well and cured from all my previous ailments. Yours to commend, Will P. Herring, Prop. of Tremont House (later owner of the Herring Hotel)." There were hundreds of such testimonials.

The Chicago and North Western Railway Company became interested and sent a cask of the water to Chicago to be analyzed to ascertain the mineral properties in the water and the quantity of incrustation matter which would form in their boilers should they use water from such a well. It was found to be unsuitable for use in locomotives, and the following is the Chicago and North Western analysis of the Tremont House water: Silica, .88; bicarbonate of iron,.22; alumina, .04; sulphate of lime, 74.27; sulphate magnesia, 2.61; carbonate magnesia, 31.50; and sulphate soda, 58.83.

Another well was drilled by Weir Bros., for the use of the canning factory for both their canning processes and fire protection.

Palmer Bros. decided to drill on their property using their own equipment which they themselves manufactured at their foundry. They used more up-to-date machinery and steam power. Their first hole was proceeding well with the new equipment until one night unknown persons filled up the hole with scrap iron, so it was necessary to drill another hole. The water burst forth with even more force than previous wells because the surface of the ground was lower (present location on Seventh Avenue of Funk Bros. Seed Co.)

According to C. A. Huston's "Jumbo Well", from which most of this data is taken, people were going back and forth





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**MARVIN SMITH  
Belle Plaine (Luzerne)**



*A stove "way back when" required slavish attention,  
(The heat and the hard work we won't even mention)  
What a difference to let Reddy K. do your cooking,  
Things are done to a turn without your even looking!*

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IN THE COURSE OF PAST YEARS Reddy Kilowatt has taken over dozens of household tasks . . . freeing you from work . . . giving you time for other activities. He promises there'll be many new, wonderful developments, too, in your bright electric future!



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Congratulations, Belle Plaine, on your first 100 years . . . from all of us at Iowa Electric Light and Power Company.





late into the night carrying water from this well. People started to send kegs and bottles to Belle Plaine to be returned to them filled with the mineral water. Although the water lost some of its valuable properties in transit, the railroad and express companies were kept busy shipping the bottles until Jumbo caused other wells to cease flowing with the exception of Palmer's.

The city merchants felt they needed more wells for fire protection and two stock companies were formed: the first consisted of businessmen east of the



**Top: Well at intersection of Twelfth Street and Ninth Avenue, view toward west. Another well is being drilled one block west.**

**Bottom: Same well, looking southeast.**



**One of earliest views of Jumbo. Drilling rig of Weir in place.**

center of the block between Beech (8th Avenue) and Maple (9th Avenue), and the second group west of said center. The first group hired Palmer Bros. to drill a hole in the intersection of First and Maple (now 12th Street and 9th Avenue). Palmer Bros., were very successful with this well. It was found that a fire hose could be attached to the casing and that water could be directed with great force. This well far surpassed its predecessors, and showed there was a "terrible power hidden from man's eye." After finishing this well, Palmer Bros. moved their well digging equipment to the intersection of Beech and First Street (Eighth Avenue and Twelfth Street) and struck water at 223 feet. Work was stopped on this well in order to make plans for water mains, but before plans could be completed, the well ceased to flow because of Jumbo.

Up to that time the wells drilled had been in the north part of the city while the southern part of town, particularly in the vicinity of the school, had virtually no water for fire protection. Several south side residents signed an agreement with Weir & Sons, the total cost not to exceed \$175, to pay equal amounts for a well. The city and school district agreed to put it in condition for use. A contract was made to drill a three inch well; the other wells had been two-inch wells. It was naturally supposed that Mr. Weir had equipment to drill a three-inch hole, but he only

had two-inch equipment and said he would ream it out to three inches. Water was struck at the intersection of Eighth Avenue and Eighth Street on Thursday, August 26, 1886, at 1:30 P.M. at a depth of 195 feet.

The top section of casing was damaged in the drilling and an attempt was made to put in another. This attempt was unsuccessful and Weir and Sons hitched up their teams and left for the afternoon. Observers saw that the water was washing out the hole but Weir was expected back momentarily. When he did not return, people became alarmed and called his sons back to put a section on. This they did, and left for the night.

On Friday, August 27, Weir and Sons returned and a crowd watched while they slowly drew out the sixty foot casing. With the casing loose the water burst outside. Weir began churning the casing up and down and put some seventy feet of casing in, with the water flow increasing all the time on the outside. He proceeded to churn the casing in until about four o'clock, when he left for town. The well was a monster already; water and rock were boiling out at a terrible rate. Men were set to work to keep ditches open but it was impossible. Weir returned and left, came back again, hitched up his team and drove off. Mr. Weir was never seen again in that vicinity. However, at the time everyone supposed he was going after material to work with. At





1911

# 51 YEARS

1962



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**GEORGE PETERMAN**  
1911 — 1953



Present Owner  
**ROBERT HADENFELDT**  
1947 —

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## HADENFELDT SHOE STORE





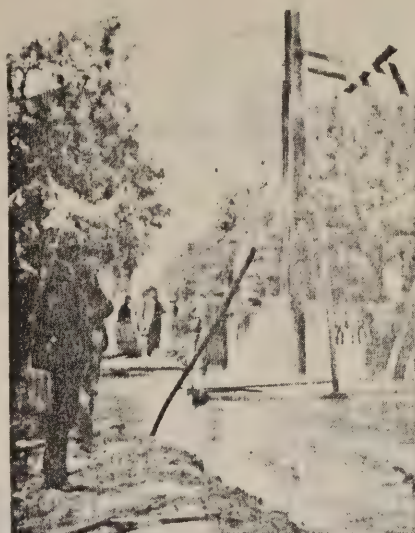


**August 28, 1886. Jumbo had washed out to a diameter of three feet in 3 days. Man at right in straw hat is Rev. John Stauffacher, man at his right elbow is A. A. Selden with son Ulysses.**

six P.M. people were excited; at seven they were frantic; by eight they were almost crazy. They appealed to the mayor who called the council. Telegrams were sent out to county seats for a pile driver. One council member went to Tama City to see what help could be had. Men were busy trying to keep ditches open and taking the casing out which Weir had put in, in order to be ready for the pile driver should it arrive. Two bushel grain sacks, filled with sand, were thrown out as quickly as they were dumped in.

On Saturday, August 28, word came that pile drivers were not available on such short notice. About nine o'clock Eugene Palmer of Palmer Bros. suggested the use of two boiler flues, sixteen inches in diameter, fifty-five feet in length, which might reach the blue clay and shut off the immense flow of sand. The sand later proved to come from the very bottom but this fact was not known then. Everyone was pleased with the idea and the council gave Palmers power to proceed. Palmer Brothers got the flues, which were nine miles southwest, and worked all night to get them in condition to put in.

On Sunday, August 29, the county pile driver arrived and the flues were taken to the well. Here was the equipment so sorely needed, plus the men who knew how to use it. The first section of flue was lowered and driven almost in. The second was attached and driven down. When it struck something solid the water ceased to flow outside and boiled out the top which extended some twenty feet above the surface. Water flew in every direction as the pile driver struck. When the second section was in and the sand still flowed freely, Palmer Brothers removed the smoke stack from their foundry and attached it to the flue.



**View north on Eighth Avenue after pile driver was erected.**



**View north showing sand piled up and ditches being kept open.**

Men worked all around the site trying to clear away sand which stood three to five feet deep around the well and in the yards and streets for a distance of several hundred feet. Water was channeled in two streams twelve feet wide and a foot deep and the water ran south two miles to the river. The water had thrown out small sticks, stones, and debris at first, and with the larger volume of water came sticks of wood three and four inches in diameter and two to three feet long, canal coal and immense quantities of larger stones. This debris was a source of income to young entrepreneurs who sold stones, sand, and bottles of water as souvenirs.

On Monday, August 30, the sixteen foot stack was almost down. Sand almost ceased and another six foot section was stretched and fitted over the end of the stack. Everyone was sure of success. The pile driver drove the last section down and it was apparent solid ground had been reached. A cheer went up from the crowd; the pile driver hit the section a few more times for good measure to make doubly sure it would not wash out. A gasp of incredulity and horror rose from the watchers . . . the whole thing went down into the cavity . . . flues, stack and all.

Work was again at a standstill. An engineer from Chicago was sent for. Palmer Brothers conceived the idea of a cone the shape of a funnel small end down, twenty-four feet long and thirty inches in diameter, and they proceeded to make it.

On Wednesday, Sept. 1, Mr. George Morgan, engineer, arrived and went with authorities to see the well. He visited the foundry where work was proceeding on the cone, endorsed the plan, complimented Palmers on the idea, and conferred with officials during the afternoon. He estimated that





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is a far cry from those of years ago! Central Iowa Telephone Co. prides itself on modern equipment in use at the Belle Plaine office.

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**see the Herniks.**

Quality Eileenmere 1695th 3rd  
Aberdeen Angus Bull purchased  
at Iowa State Angus Sale,  
February 6, 1962



**HERNIK ANGUS FARM**

2 miles north of Belle Plaine — Hickory 4-2690





3,472 gallons of water per minute boiled out of the well continuously. He said that the well was certainly worth coming a long way to see, and left on the evening train.

On Thursday, September 2, the cone was ready to be tried. It was filled with sand and cement and a two-inch pipe was inserted into the inside pipe to guide the cone. With a little work the cone passed through the surface hole and was lowered sixty feet by adding more pipe. At that point it met an obstruction. As night was coming on, work was halted and Jumbo was left in charge of watchmen. A visitor fell in, but came out about as fast as he went in, unhurt but badly frightened.



Pile driver lowering cone into Jumbo.

On Friday, Sept. 3, the obstruction still prevented lowering of the cone and the cone was withdrawn. It was found that the two-inch pipe was bent and broken. Again night prevented further work.

On Saturday, September 4th, the hole was measured and the cone enlarged a little. Work was pushed and the thirty-six inch cone was lowered that afternoon to sixty feet. Sand bags, rock, etc., were thrown in and the hammer used once or twice . . . the cone disappeared! Water boiled out as badly as ever. Everyone thought the plan would have met success had it been tried earlier.

Since a Soldier's Reunion was to be held the next week all plans were halted and a water tight crib with an opening to the east and a cover over it was erected. Nothing more was done until Oct. 12, when the council decided to advertise for bids to control the well. On October 21 a contract was let to Mr. Luther King of Marshalltown. Terms were \$2,000 for the work, with a \$4,000 contractor's bond, the work to be finished in 90 days.

Mr. King was a man of no small perspicacity. He built a high board fence around the well, obtained a diver's suit and planned to charge admit-

tance fees to those who had formerly enjoyed this wonder at no cost whatsoever. However, the council forbade the charge and ordered King to control the well, and not to make a show of it. King had a man go down into the well in a diving suit several times and he, himself, went down at least twice to eighty-one feet, but found nothing. He finally put in 162 feet of 18-inch casing, but with little success. By March 21, 1887, the council had extended the time and was growing weary. They ordered King to put the well in as good condition as he found it within five days. Mr. King disregarded the orders of the council and proceeded to put stone in around the casing. On April 6 the filling was 107 feet from the surface; by April 11 the filling was within thirty feet of the surface. Preparations were made to cement and the cavity was filled by April 12. King tried to cap the flow of the well but with

little success. A piece of the casing broke and it was necessary to lower the water around the top of the casing to repair the break. Thirty feet of filling washed out as a result of the break. The cavity was refilled and the well was capped. Pumps kept the area free of water while the casing was covered with cement. But another leak appeared and a two-inch pipe was put in the leak and cement packed around it. Another valve was ordered. A manhole box was put around the valve when it was installed and cement around the box. The derrick was finally removed and the site cleaned up. King notified the council he was ready to close the contract.

During inspection by the council they shut off the valve in the large pipe and plugged the small pipe and water boiled out around the cement. The council found that Mr. King had not fulfilled his contract. King offered to settle



Scene of Jumbo on Sept. 5, 1886, after cribbing had been erected.





# On July 28, 1894 The Lincoln Was the Hottest Spot in Town\*



## THE LINCOLN CAFE—

Make it your headquarters for  
good eating now and during the  
Centennial Celebration.



\* The Lincoln Cafe is located on almost the exact spot where the great fire of 1894 originated.

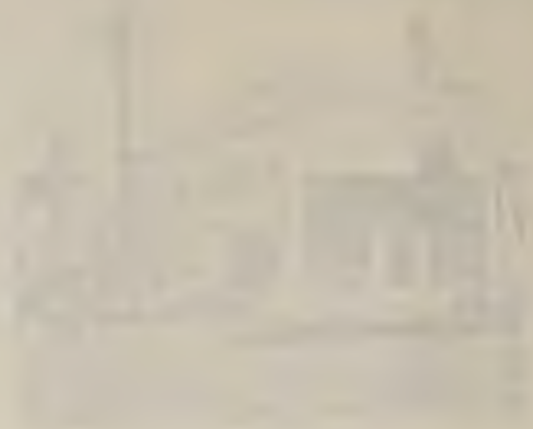
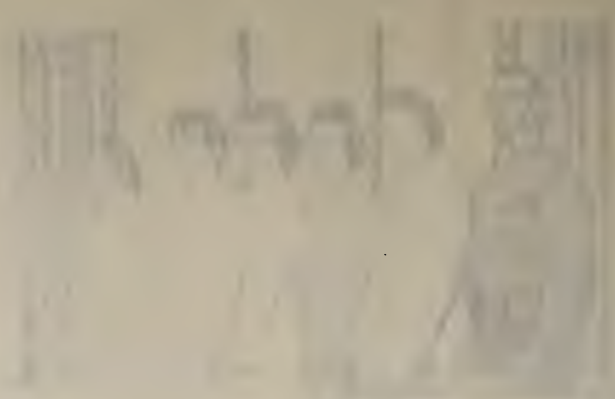
Historically, it is significant also, as it is in the 100 x 180-foot strip deeded to William Postlewaithe by Presley Hutton to ease Postlewaithe's claim on the land Hutton gave to start Belle Plaine. Where the Lincoln Cafe now stands Postlewaithe built a log shanty and lived.

On July 28, 1894 The Lincoln  
Was the Holiest Spirit in Town

THE

WILSON CASE

THE WILSON CASE  
AND THE WILSON CASE  
AND THE WILSON CASE





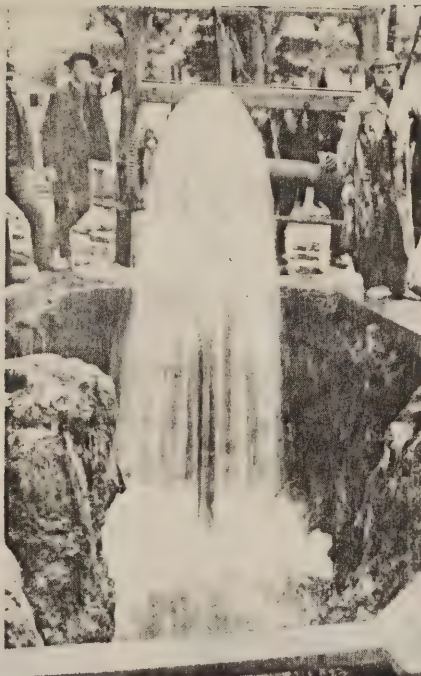


**Top:** Scene showing sand piled up and ditches to carry water away from Jumbo.

**Bottom:** Mr. King in diver's suit preparing to make descent.



**View to south.** Jumbo was a constant attraction for small boys.



**Mr. King standing at right.** Jumbo still refused to be controlled.

considered under control. According to Mr. C. A. Huston in his "Jumbo Well", "Jumbo", though drilled only 193 feet, proved to be a hungry old fellow, for he has stored 77 feet of sixteen inch pipe, 60 feet of five-inch pipe with a large cone attached, over 162 feet of eighteen-inch pipe, besides forty car loads of stone, 130 barrels of cement, and an unestimable amount of sand and clay. He has at last decided to be satisfied with what he has and behave himself hereafter."

So it was that after fourteen months of fighting, Jumbo was harnessed.

On December 3, 1954, a large granite boulder was moved to the northeast corner of the Eighth Avenue and Eighth Street intersection to mark the site of the famous Jumbo Well. The water that now flows from the well empties into Minnow Creek to the east. The Ladies of Artesia chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution purchased a bronze plaque to be placed on the stone to commemorate the historic site. On May 21, 1955, the bronze plaque was dedicated in a ceremony held upon the site.

An interesting event took place in January of 1957 on the Elmer Janes farm southeast of Belle Plaine. Bill and Ed Kaderavek of Marengo drilled a well for Mr. Janes. After the well was capped, water worked its way outside of the casing and the cap had to be removed. Water was channeled to a creek.

rels of cement were put between the pipes. The outside cavity was enlarged to permit several feet of stone and cement. Water was pumped from the cavity outside the pipes and an eight foot curb made to enclose the area. By October 6, 1887, the cavity was almost completely filled and Jumbo was

for \$1,862 but the council was adamant. King refused to touch the well again and threatened to sue. The council remained firm. On June 3, three days later, the council hired Palmer Brothers to finish the work.

On September 15th the cement was cut down. The top of the casing was removed. Ninety feet of eight inch pipe were lowered into the casing along with an invention of Mr. Palmer for shutting off the water between the two pipes. The space between was filled with hemp and soon all the water came out the eight inch pipe, leaving dead water between and outside the pipes. Bar-







1957

Janss' First Meat Market

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Specialize in Home Killed Beef  
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"Very Big On Flavor"



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**Cream**

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**DEAN McLEOD**

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Valve being lowered.

Six tons of crushed rock were used to stop the flow, but three weeks later, while the family was away, the well broke loose again and filled another

well on the Janes farm. The pressure lost caused other wells in this area to slow or cease and livestock on the Bill Donovan farm four miles away had to be removed to a more adequate water supply. The well was finally recased with the use of modern methods and ceased being troublesome.

At the writing of this report, in the year of our Centennial, no other "Jumbos" have broken loose. But the thought is ever present: who knows?

#### Chapter 11

### The Great Fire of 1894

The year 1894 was an eventful one in the life of the thriving metropolis of Belle Plaine. January of that year unfolded upon a city of some 3,200 souls with a business district consisting of two banks, hotels, livery stables, restaurants, blacksmiths, drygoods and millinery establishments, tailors and haberdasheries, grocery stores and meat markets, harness shop, grain elevators, furniture stores, lumber yards, druggists, barbers, saloons, and several lodge quarters. Belle Plaine also boasted an unusually fine City hall and Fire Department, a brick railroad depot, two newspapers and the recently-built Greenlee Opera House. The city was well represented in the professional



View of Main street shortly before the 1894 fire, looking west.

fields of the law, dentistry and medicine and boasted several small print shops, warehouses and other businesses common to that era. Several insurance and loan establishments were present to play a much greater part in the history of the city before many months were to pass.

The city elections were held and three fires were reported in March, as well as several tragic accidental deaths. April saw more fires and a serious smallpox scare. In May, the stables at the Herring Hotel burned; June arrived hot and dry, followed by even drier and hotter July days.

On the afternoon of Saturday, July 28, about 5:30 P. M., Robert Liddle, the



## DEDICATION of PLAQUE

to Commemorate

## OLD JUMBO WELL

by

Artesia Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution

Held on the Site of Old Jumbo Well,  
Corner Eighth Avenue and Eighth Street  
Belle Plaine, Iowa

Saturday, May 21, 1955, 2:00 P.M.



## PROGRAM

Invocation	Rev. Paul Heath
Pastor, Christ Methodist Church	
Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag	Mrs. R. C. Connor
Flag Code Chairman	
Introductions	Mrs. R. O. Burrows, Sr.
Chairman, Plaque Committee	
Mrs. Gretchen Strandberg	
Mrs. Arthur Blinkinsop	
Mrs. Burdette Beck	
"The Story of Old Jumbo Well"	George Raabe
President, Four County Historical Society	
Presentation of Plaque to City	Mrs. L. M. Winslow
Regent, Artesia Chapter	
Acceptance of Plaque	Edward Roger Fyburn
Mayor, City of Belle Plaine	
Patriotic Selections	Brass Choir
Under Direction of Mr. Paul Nielsen	

Dedication program for placing of marker by D.A.R.



Group surrounding marker at the site of Jumbo, left to right: Mrs. R. O. Burrows, Sr., Mrs. Arthur Blinkensop, Mrs. Burdette Beck, Mrs. Ada Hoffman, Mrs. Caroline Connor, Mrs. Gretchen Strandberg, Mrs. Arthur Nichols, Miss Joan Burrows, Mrs. Walter Shields, Mrs. Jennie Courter, Mrs. Calvin Korn, George Raabe, Mayor Roger Pyburn, Rev. Paul Heath. Seated are Mrs. L. M. Winslow, Mrs. Everett Korn.

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# RCA Victor

## Living Color T. V.



Ray  
Wiese



Daryl  
Wiese



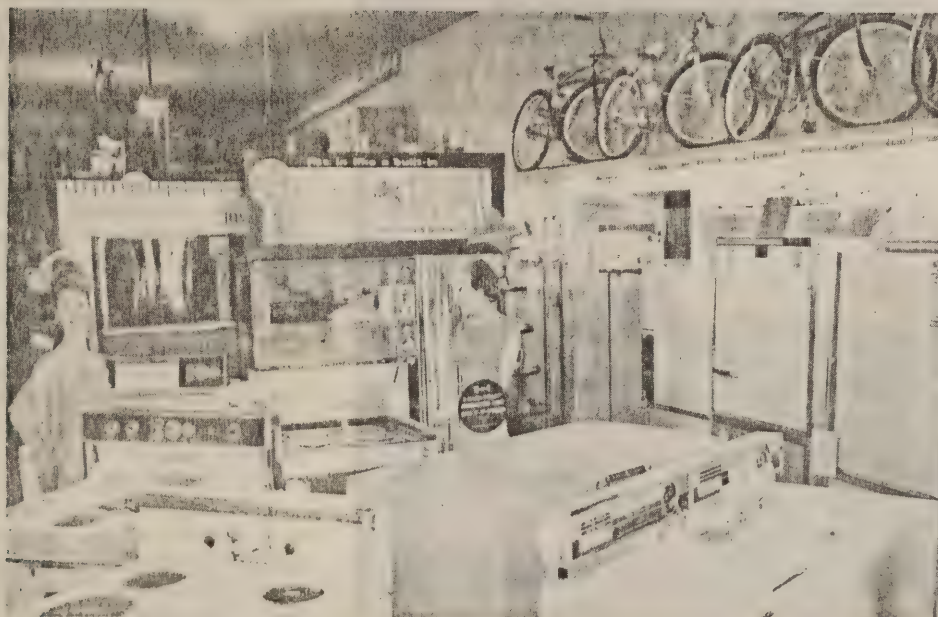
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# S & W HOME & AUTO SUPPLY

Belle Plaine, Iowa





blacksmith, was repairing a wagon wheel at the same time C. H. Kroh was raising baled hay to his nearby feed store (the two establishments were located approximately where the Rural Fire Department and the Lincoln cafe are now) when a spark from the forge was blown into the hay, causing a fire that quickly spread across the street to the City Hall and Wheeler's Livery Stable. Fanned by strong, dry winds the fire spread quickly in four directions. From the west side of Eighth Avenue it swept through brick buildings, residences, warehouses, stores and the massive renowned Greenlee Opera House, (which was located about where the King Theatre now is) all along Twelfth Street. Fire departments from Cedar Rapids, Tama and Blainstown were summoned and came by rail and were stationed at various points downtown with the hope of waylaying the conflagration. Belle Plaine's own "Old Rescue" hose cart was destroyed in a hero's death. The depot and Henry's lumber yard on the south side of Twelfth Street fell and all communication was cut off. Buildings were torn down to divert the fire and some buildings on south Eighth Avenue were saved, including the famous Burley house. Every comforter and blanket in the Burley house was saturated and hung on walls, roof and railings to stem the fire. East along Twelfth Street almost all of the buildings on both sides of the street were burned or had to be torn down in order to stop the spread of the fire. Many buildings on Thirteenth Street were torn down to stop the fire from the rear of Twelfth Street. The fire burned east on the north side to about the then and present location of the Odd Fellows Hall. On the south side of Twelfth Street the only building left standing was the one that now houses Comers Home Heating Appliances and the Beauty Nook. Almost five solid business blocks had disappeared and 80 business firms were rendered stockless and homeless with a loss of a half million dollars, with only about \$200,000 insurance coverage. There are still quite a few people in Belle Plaine who remember being taken as children to view the smouldering remains of the business district and some very good photographs of the ruins are available.

The History of Benton County, Volume I, states the summarization of the losses as follows: "The heaviest losers in the fire—those who suffered a loss of \$10,000 or over—were as follows: Opera House Block (T. F. Greenlee), main building occupied by Shaw and Bowman as a department store, \$25,000; Shaw and Bowman, \$30,000; W. H. Burrows and Co., clothier, \$17,000; J. D. Blue, dry goods merchant, \$14,000; Van Meter and Cox, druggists, \$13,000; Rob-

ert Nicholson, grocer, \$12,000; Hartman Grocery Co., \$10,000; J.J. Mosnat, building and law library, \$18,000; Solly Wertheim, clothier, \$18,000; L. Grossman,

dry goods merchant, \$16,000; William P. Hanson, Opera House, jeweler and hardware dealer, \$29,000; Nichols and Marr, \$16,000; and T. Lawrence, building and



View of ruins looking northwest. Old freight depot may be seen at lower right, burned passenger depot directly west.



Taken from Seventh Avenue and Main Street looking east. At left are massive ruins of the Greenlee Auditorium.



Taken from Seventh Avenue and Twelfth Street looking southeast. Burley House may be seen at right.





# TRIBUTE

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## Belle Plaine

### on 100 Years of Progress

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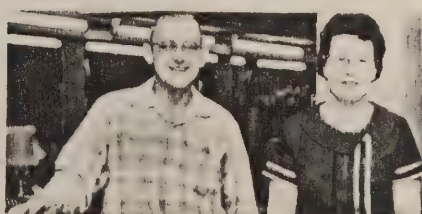
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**View from Eighth Avenue looking northeast.**

dry goods stock, \$23,000. The Knights of Pythias and Masons also were burned out and the Herring Hotel (Tremont House) was also destroyed at a loss of \$8,000."

The February 1895 Annual Supplement of The Belle Plaine Union describes the Union's plight: "The disaster came at eventide on Saturday and not a line of news type, a wheel, or an ounce of ink was left in the city, but Tuesday morning early The Union appeared, a welcome visitor, bearing full information concerning the conflagration . . . the greatest ever recorded for an Iowa town." In the first issue of The Belle Plaine Union after the fire were these predictions: "But you can't down Belle Plaine. The buildings reared by man may crumble, but the will of the freeman is undaunted. Out of this sad desolation a city will rise, Phoenix-like, more beautiful than ever before. Already the hammer and saw are going and the plans are maturing for reconstruction. The first building to go up was The Union shanty on Second (Thirteenth) Street. Nails from Tama held it together. Monday morning found the men in Chicago buying new outfits to replace the ones destroyed. The next shacks were those of Tom H. Milner and Dr. Vincent . . . As soon as the bricks are cool enough to handle, J. J. Mosnat will rebuild two buildings. Nichols & Marr, the Citizens bank, Hartman Bros., and S. S. Sweet will be with him. Van Meter & Cox will wait only to see the inside of their safe. The Herring Hotel will rise rapidly. H. H. Wheeler will build on his Beech Street (Eighth Avenue) lots. Dozens of others will decide as soon as they catch their breath.

Keep a-coming our way. We will take care of you O.K."

Quick settlements were made by most insurance companies but some acted shamefully. Merchants provided themselves with temporary quarters in newly erected shanties, old store rooms, in offices, sometimes two or three crowded into one building. Everyone was willing to stand the inconvenience of being crowded to give his neighbor a space. Within a very few days of the fire, new stocks were on the way and by July 31st several places were open for business and trade was carried on. Nearly every merchant inserted an ad in that week's Union. The construction men, masons, carpenters

and laborers showed the same determination and haste to aid in rebuilding. Much credit was given S. S. Sweet for the architectural beauty of the city, because he prevailed upon the first men rebuilding to employ skilled architects. Others followed suit so that Main Street was built in an orderly fashion.

So well did the combined efforts go, that in five short months a committee was delegated to plan a gala day to celebrate the new and better Belle Plaine with the theme: "From Ashes to Elegance." The committee in charge of the celebration announced: "The city was wiped out as if by a whirlwind, sudden and unexpectedly, and so has been its recovery . . . No one realized that within five short months almost every trace of this destruction should have passed away and handsome, stately blocks of brick and stone, more beautiful than ever . . . larger and better equipped, would cover the lands so forlorn, and would actually be inhabited by our busy undaunted merchants and professional men . . . The worst is now passed . . . As you step off the train, instead of seeing a narrow frame depot, a fine brick structure, two stories high, meets your eye."

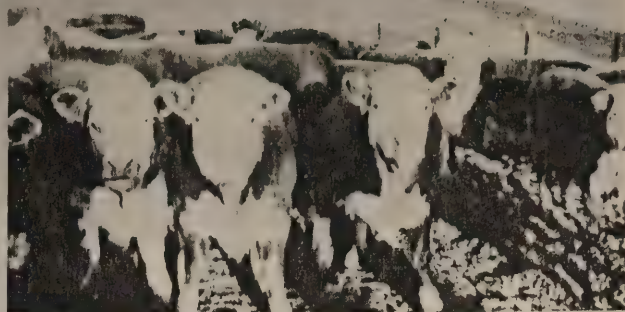
Main Street looked vastly different . . . Mr. Henry's lumber yard was all south of Sherman Street and as one looked north he saw the Lawrence building; on the west the new brick Montgomery block, and north across from it the new Citizens National Bank building of grey marble, brick and copper. West of the bank was James Reece's double front. Up Eighth Avenue on the left a plate glass front, farther along on the southwest corner of Eighth Avenue and Thirteenth Street, Mary Reymann built a two-story brick block and just across



**View from Eighth Avenue, south of tracks, looking slightly northwest.**







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Belle Plaine



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Gloves . . . Belts . . . Billfolds . . . Shoe Polish . . . Shoe Laces

— "YOU WEAR 'EM OUT — WE'LL FIX 'EM!" —







View of the northwest corner of Ninth Avenue and Twelfth Street being rebuilt after the fire, built by Citizens Bank. Next west was Ingwersen's Hardware, in the distance the C & N W roundhouse.

the street north the foundation for the Herring Hotel was laid. On the southeast corner (of Eighth Avenue and Thirteenth Street) was J. A. Wheeler's mammoth livery stable with fronts on both Eighth Avenue and Thirteenth Street

and on south was the City Hall and Fire Department with a belfrey on top and the jail behind. On the south side of Main Street were the Lawrence, Nichols, Burrows and Hanson blocks, and the Mosnat, Zalesky, Hardy and Hartman



Guthrie Opera House on the northeast corner of Ninth Avenue and Main Street, built after fire. The occasion was probably a 1905 clean-up campaign sparked by The Union. On the dray are Matt Ealy and Cliff Craig, John Zeller standing by horses. Men holding brooms from right to left: F. E. Snyder, unknown, John Milversted, George Sweeny, Riley Gordon, Dave Strachan, Irv Newman. At left in picture are Traverse Livery, Rejahl Monument Shop, Fanton house.



Early view of Herring Cottage built after fire. Will Herring on porch, Jim and Ed by steps, Edna Blanche on horse.





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Belle Plaine





blocks. Next was the First National Bank and the Post Office. Rising on the northeast corner of Twelfth Street and Ninth Avenue was the fabulous Guthrie Auditorium. On the north side starting at Eighth Avenue and moving toward Ninth Avenue one found Dr. Cox's block, Nichols and McIntieer, then the Carney and Vincent buildings, the Pythian Castle, two of the Nichols rooms with the Masonic Temple above, R. Turnbull's and the William White building. Hundreds and thousands of dollars had been spent to insure a progressive industrious city. On the twentieth of December, 1894, a celebration was held to commemorate the occasion. The officers of the day were Hon. S. S. Sweet, president; J. C. Milner, marshal; Rev. F. C. Wolfe, Chaplain; Tom H. Milner, orator. A parade formed at 10 A.M. at the intersection of Main Street and Eighth Avenue and marched through the Triumphal Arch to enter the Guthrie Auditorium. There were bands from Toledo, Elberon, Keystone and Belle Plaine, the G. A. R. Martial Band, and a 60-voice chorus led by Wayne Sullenbarger. The oration was delivered by Tom Milner and, after an adjournment for dinner, free entertainment commenced for the huge crowd gathered to witness the celebration. At 2 P. M. Japanese daylight fireworks were displayed on the street, a band concert was given and at 6 o'clock the Triumphal Arch and city were illuminated by electricity. Souvenir pamphlets were printed which said: "You may depend upon it, Belle Plaine will be bigger and better than ever, and will make herself the "Queen Market of the Big 4." Many difficulties arose between the fire and the reconstruction, including the usual

problems involved in so great a rebuilding project, and a diphtheria epidemic which claimed a score of victims only one month after the fire. Undaunted, the valiant little town carried on to celebrate her Semi-Centennial and to look back on 100 years of life.

#### Chapter 12

### Belle Plaine's Semi-Centennial in 1912

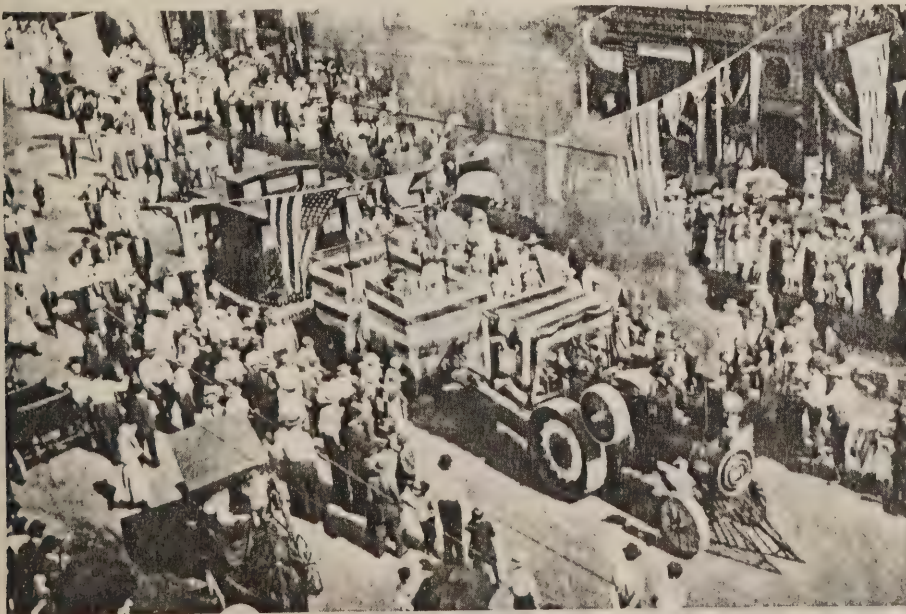
Just as 1962 finds Belle Plaine planning a celebration for the 100th anniversary of the town's founding, 1912 found the city preparing to cele-

brate its 50th birthday. Plans were laid months ahead for a full week of celebration. Each day was planned as a separate event and at the end of the week which began on Monday, July 1, the whole town heaved a sigh of relief . . . both for the enormity of the task accomplished and for the end of a full week of festivities.

Monday was Firemen's Day and Tuesday was Homecoming Day. Showers marred the first two days and crowds were not large. On Wednesday, Railroad Day, everyone turned out and the success of the week was assured. The railroad men provided plenty of entertainment for the crowd. There was a burlesque of the superintendent and timekeeper by "Shorty" Kirk. Dick Hunt, Jr., won the bicycle race. Faye Zimmerman and Clyde Rucker won foot races, Eliza-



**Railroad Day Parade with G.A.R., Belle Plaine Band, WRC, and marching railroad men.**



**The Overland Express, built by Ira Benner.**

beth Hickey won the pony race, and a Tug-of-War between the Round House men and the Bridge and Building men was won by the latter.

A parade was held each day and the Railroad Parade featured a replica engine built by Frank Krubel with George Janes as engineer and Richard Box as fireman. The Overland Limited, conceived and built by Ira Benner, consisted of a traction engine, box or baggage car, and caboose. John Walton was the conductor; Ed Winslow was engineer, Ira Benner fireman, Chauncey Viall and Roy Sanders were brakemen. To the delight of the crowd the train was stopped by a hot box in front of the Nichols and Herejk Drug Store and the disguised railroad men unloaded freight, chased off some hoboes, and assisted an old lady aboard with boxes, bundles, and a bird cage. Robbers attacked the train and made good their escape. The watching crowd applauded the performance.





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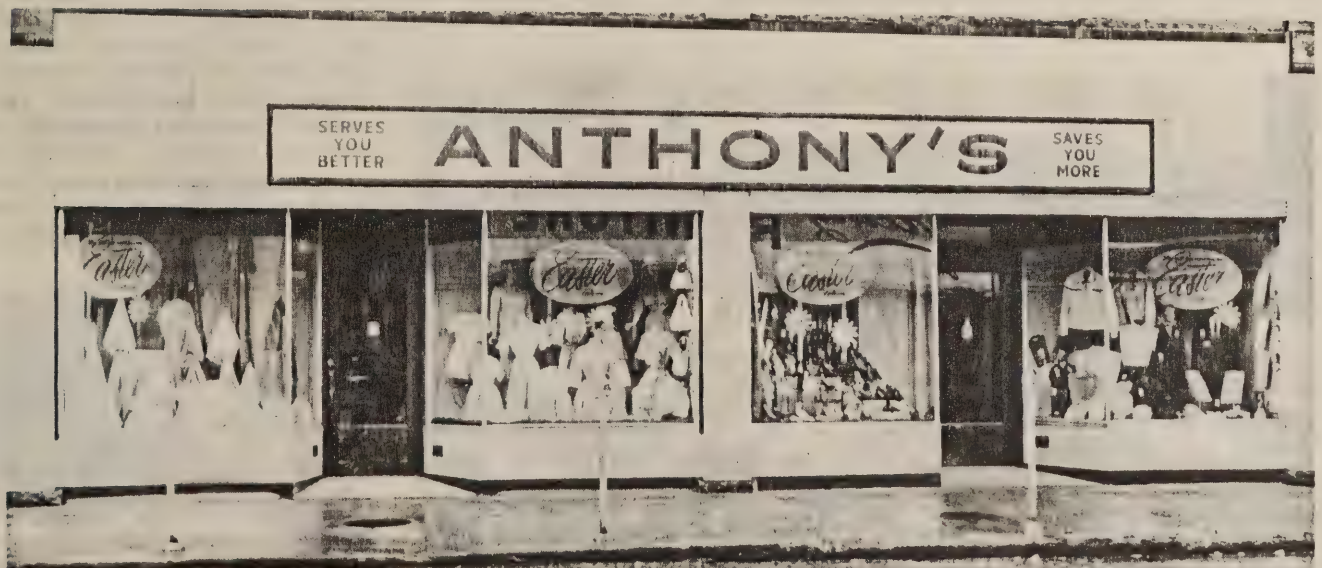
Buckhide

Acme

Loveable

Beacon

Ron Lethem—Lil Studt—Carolyn Kern—Bob Nielsen—Marie Walters



— ANTHONY'S —







**Fraternal Day. Floats of Modern Woodmen of America, Royal Neighbors, and American Nobles.**

In the evening music and speeches at the opera house were followed by a smoker at the skating rink with short talks given by J. C. Milner, Dr. Cox, Verne Brown, J. C. Rucker, Tom Murray, W. C. Scrimgeour, A. F. Whitney and others.

The Glorious Fourth was ushered in by a salute in charge of C. C. Ride-nour. The Industry Day parade on that day featured the following: the Fire Department in full force and uniform; Beem Brothers had a gasoline engine working a pump, washing machine and churn; First National Bank was represented by a young lady driving a carriage drawn by Shetland ponies; Jake Harper's float had a painter painting a house; F. H. Henry showed material from his yard; Woodruff Greenhouse had young ladies dispensing carnations to the crowd; Butzloff's Hardware had the only auto in the parade; Eclipse Lumber had a load of coal drawn by a dapple gray team and viewers could

guess the weight and win the contents; P. R. Muench had a bakery scene with giant pretzels; The Union had a water wagon which warned all to "keep on the water wagon and read The Union."

The most popular event of the afternoon was the fat man's race between the Andrews Brothers and Ed Henry which was won by the latter. In the evening a crowd of 5,000 to 7,000 gathered for a concert and fireworks.

On Fraternal Day, J. C. Milner was marshal of the day. The place of honor in the parade was given to the Old Soldiers who, with their drum corps, followed Mayor Burnham and

Day Marshal Colteaux. There were 22 soldiers and each carried a Springfield rifle. They were followed by the WRC float, the Belle Plaine Canton of Odd Fellows led by Major General Pascall, the Odd Fellows float with their goat on it, carriages of Odd Fellows and Rebekahs, and the Rebekah float decorated in pink, white and green, featuring the 16 members of the Degree Team. Modern Woodmen of America had a log cabin with red fox hides and wolf hides, escorted by woodmen carrying axes. Royal Neighbors had a float with their officers in robes seated on a platform. American Nobles' float had a canopy with officers seated underneath and mounted guards escorting them on horseback. The Red Men's Lodge had a float with four wigwams, one on each corner, with Indians in each tent. Red Men escorted the float and whenever the parade halted they danced around the float. The ZCBJ marched, led by their color bearer. The Loyal Order of Moose had 20 beautiful home town girls dressed in white, seated pyramid fashion on their float. Knights of Pythias were represented by their official Senate in ceremonial gowns.

In the evening Helen Lawrence, a teacher at the Columbia College of Music, provided music which was followed by talks by J. C. Milner, Rev. Vinton Lee and Rev. Dilman Smith.

Farmer's Day was on Saturday and the parade that day featured the history of the American people. W. J. Guinn on his champing steed was marshal of the day. Some rural residents were dressed as American



**Fraternal Day. Float of Loyal Order of Moose with twenty local beauties.**



**Farmer's Day Parade featured Indians, Puritans, pioneers, log cabin.**





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BELLE PLAINE





Indians, others dressed as Puritans carrying muskets, one of which had been carried through the Revolutionary War by the great-great-grandfather of Jacob Harper. A log cabin was on one float and on another was a spinning wheel in operation. The oldest and newest farm machinery was featured: an eight-foot binder, double row cultivator, disc plow, hay rake, side delivery hay rake, hay loader, drill seeder, mower, manure spreader. A reaction gas engine drawing its gang of plows excited considerable comment among bystanders. There were boys and girls on ponies and three floats representing club life of the farm. Two young farmers rode a bull dangling corn in front of his nose. The evening exercises starred Col. McIlrath who spoke on the advantages of farm life. He especially urged progress in the delivery of supplies to the farm, centralization of schools for better and less costly education, improved roads and bridges,



**Farmer's Day Parade had log cabin, spinning wheel in operation, covered wagon.**



**Farmer's Day Parade featured implements. Man with wooden plow and white horse is Jacob Rossway.**

and greater support of home industries by the farmer in order to improve the community and maintain schools.

On Sunday, following the six days of the celebration, the churches held union services in the big tent which had served all week for meetings. A union choir furnished music. Throughout the week of celebration local talent provided music. The Belle Plaine Band played every day except for the Fourth when it had a previous long-standing engagement at Vining and on that day the Elberon Band played. The St. Cecelia Club furnished

music throughout the week for evening programs. The Women's Clubs provided rest rooms for the public. All the lodges held open house and the whole spirit of the Semi-Centennial was one of welcome and hospitality.

#### **Fifty Years Ago in 1912 These Were The Events of Note**

January 13—Dorothy McCune won the local declam contest and will represent Belle Plaine in the dramatic division at Brooklyn.

February 1—Helen Kubic, Jessie Douglas and Raya Warren won the local spelling contest.

February 26—A new elevator will be built at Luzerne by the Luzerne Mercantile Co. at a cost of \$5,000.

March 14—Cora Dodd and Ernest Tippie were married by Rev. Vinton Lee, who also administered baptism to Miss Alna Dodd after the ceremony.

April 11—The Commercial Club went on record as favoring a city park, electroliers for the business district, and a general clean-up day.

April 18—Trenching has begun for the laying of sewer lines on Main Street, Seventh and Eighth Avenues.

April 25—Reliance Brick and Tile Co., will increase its kilns from eight to 14.

May 12—Dr. Joshua Worley, pioneer doctor, passed away. He had served as president of the school board and had an abiding interest in the children and education in this community. He was buried at Koszta.



**Class of 1912, back row left to right, Ed Snyder, Whitfield Ruhl, Richard Miller, Harold Hartman, Ed Herring. Front row, left to right, Adela Moravec, Maude Dees, Winnifred Van Meter, Lela Rote, Mary Montgomery, Cleo Rejahl.**





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Belle Plaine,  
Iowa

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ON THEIR CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

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**Members**

of the

**American Dental Association**

**Dr. J. P. FOOTE**

**Dr. L. J. RYCHNOVSKY**

**Dr. HOWARD K. THOMASSON**





May 16—Miss Lillian Montgomery and the class of 1913 entertained the graduating class: Maude Dees, Mary Montgomery, Adela Moravec, Cleo Rejahl, Lela Rote, Winifred Van Meter, Harold Hartman, Edward Herring, Richard Miller, Whitfield Ruhl and Edward Snyder.

May 30—Graduation exercises at the opera house featured the following orations: "The Educational Value of Play," by Mary Montgomery; "The Recall of Judicial Decisions," by Edward Herring; and "The High Cost of Living," by Maude Dees.

June 6—A double wedding in South Dakota was a surprise to this community. Gertrude Kelsey and William Mall, and Leona Creamer and Waldo Mall were united in matrimony.

June 27—Final plans have been announced for the Semi-Centennial Celebration. Headquarters will be a large tent in back of the opera house. There will be four free street acts daily, band concerts and baseball games each afternoon, and athletic contests on the third and fourth.

July 11—The James Lally farm near Dysart was rented for a five-year period for \$6.50 per acre per annum. A pretty steep rent, some will say, but before that lease has expired it will be found to have been a cheap rental. Iowa farms are better than a gold mine.

July 18—The new high school will be ready for use this fall. There will be 144 desks in the assembly and a capacity of 300. There will be seats for 489 in the grades and high school building and a capacity of 600.

July 18—Excavation for the new Z.C.B.J. Hall began on Main Street east of Tenth Avenue. It will cost over \$10,000.

August 1—Chairman G. R. Ahrens of the Executive Committee for the Semi-Centennial gave his financial report as follows: \$1,045 by subscriptions, \$227.65 from concessions, \$1,171.18 expended leaving a balance of \$101.47, all subscriptions paid but two.

September 5—Mr. Fred McCulloch returned from the State Fair at Des Moines with three first prizes, three seconds, three thirds and one fourth. His premiums amounted to \$200.

September 5—The Canning Company has already canned about 900,000 cans of sweet corn and expects the present pack to total 1,200,000 cans, about the same as last year.

October 10—Butzloff Hardware offers a single barrel shot gun for \$4.

November 7—Wilson swept the nation carrying 38 states. In Belle Plaine the Democrats, who had not tasted victory for 20 years, gathered on Main Street with noise and a band

and lights, built a bonfire at Eighth Avenue and Main Street, and then proceeded to serenade all the Republicans of the city, calling upon C. A. Sweet, H. W. McCune, C. A. Blossom, F. H. Henry, O. C. Burrows, C. J. Snitkay, J. C. Milner, W. D. Barnard and the Herring Cottage.

November 28—Closing out sales by Rex Ringler, Frank Swatosh, A. S. Haase and F. J. Formanek.

December 12—Christmas prices on groceries at the East End Grocery and Bakery: Celery, two bunches 5 cents, hickory nuts 10 cents a quart, Chase and Sanborn coffee 28 cents, fancy salmon 16 cents per pound can and fresh oysters 40 cents a quart.

Sunday dinner menu of the Burley House: Blue Point oyster cocktail, creole gumbo chicken consomme, celery en branch, queen olives, fricasse of chicken, dumplings, prime roast of beef, demi glaise, prime cut of beef rare, roast young duck, apple sauce, braised leg of lamb, jelly, lobster, molded fruit jello, white snowflake steamed potatoes, asparagus tips, escalloped corn, green apple pie, peach, chocolate, cream, mixed nuts, raisins, figs, angel food cake, vanilla ice cream, toasted bents, American cheese, tea, milk and coffee.

December, 1912—Annual receipts of the Post Office total \$8,500 and an in-

crease of \$1,500 will mean free delivery for local patrons. The working force comprises: J. C. Milner, postmaster, H. R. Grim, deputy, Lyle Gordon and Tom Malcolm, clerks, Otho England, rural route 1, and William Chown, route 2. Koszta receives its mail by pouch from route 2; Irving wants rural service from Belle Plaine; and there is need of two additional routes north and south.

Chapter 13

## Churches in Belle Plaine

### Bethany Evangelical United Brethren Church

The Evangelical Church began work here in 1862, but did not organize a congregation until 1866. For several years the work was a part of the Benton County Mission Circuit, and the ministers served Buckeye and Cedar Rapids. Sometime prior to 1900, Belle Plaine became a separate charge as part of the Belle Plaine Circuit. All of the work was in the German language.



Bethany Evangelical United Brethren Church.





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First church in Belle Plaine, built and dedicated in 1866, Evangelical Lutheran, which stood on the north side of Fifteenth Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues.

Early meetings were held in schoolhouses northeast of Belle Plaine. In 1866 the first property was acquired on Fifteenth Street between Eighth and Ninth avenues. A frame building there was known as Trinity Church. The parsonage was at the corner of Eighth Avenue and Seventeenth Street.

A split came in 1891 when an English-speaking group was formed. The older German-speaking group continued until 1905. The new group held services in various halls in town and in 1903 purchased their present property. The house on this property was moved east and turned to face south and became the central part of the present parsonage. Under Rev. Virgil Urbino the congregation erected their new church, 28x45 feet.

Under Rev. L. H. Wood the congregation remodeled the church building, adding a 16-foot wing to the east, a full basement, the present tower and vestibule. In 1932 Harry Swalm presented the bell in memory of his wife and her parents. The first record of Sunday School is 1889 with an enrollment of 120. The Women's Missionary Society and the Young People's Missionary Society were both started in 1905. Some of the family names associated with the earliest records of the church are: Schild, Wurtele, Zeller, Schnieder, Boody, Wehrman, Tatge, Fenske, Byers, Selden, Wright, Kletzing, Marshall and Emrich.

The 1946 merger of the Evangelical Church with the Church of the United Brethren in Christ produced the name change to the present: Bethany

Evangelical United Brethren Church. The church celebrated its Diamond Jubilee Nov. 7 and 9 in 1941. On Pearl Harbor Day of the same year the church burned out but was rebuilt the following summer.

Present pastor is Larry Riegel.

#### Christ Methodist Church

Methodism came to Belle Plaine soon after the end of the Civil War through the efforts of Rev. Henry J. Pilbeam and several of the city's pioneers. At the ninth session of the Upper Iowa Conference in Waterloo in 1864, Mr. Pilbeam was assigned to the West Irving Circuit which included West Irving, Patterson, Buckeye, Blake and Belle Plaine.

Belle Plaine was a settlement of some 30 families of varied faiths and creeds and a few people expressed a desire for a church organization. Seven persons gave their names to what was then called a Methodist class. The organization was completed in November of 1864, and the first meetings were held in the home of a parishioner, but halls and store buildings served as a meeting place until the first church was built on the present site and dedicated in January of 1867. The first Sunday School was on the second floor of a house built by Rev. Pilbeam on the northwest corner of Seventh Avenue and Fourteenth Street. It was started by Mrs. Pilbeam and 18 adults and children made up the first classes.

The first church officers were G. D. Blue, president; W. W. Benson, vice-president; and A. N. Twogood, secretary-treasurer. In the spring of 1889 fire destroyed the first church and a larger house of worship was built as the congregation had grown considerably in number. This edifice served to house the congregation until it was torn down in 1919 and the present church building erected. On November 2, 1919, the cornerstone for the present building was laid. The name of the church was changed at that time from First Methodist to Christ Methodist Church. It was dedicated on January 16, 1921, on which occasion the Congregational and Bethany churches dispensed with



Early Methodist Sunday School Class taught by Vera Vincent Bohlman.



Christ Methodist Church.









Front in 1925

37  
Years of

S  
E  
R  
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C  
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Front in 1962

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YOU.

Ernie and Dorothy



**Klink's** Drug Store  
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TO  
YOU,  
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THEN

and



NOW







**First Congregational Church.**

their services to join with the Methodists who held three services that day. On June 4, 1933, the group held their "Debt Free Jubilee" under the pastorate of Rev. T. M. Nielsen.

During the past years the church membership has increased steadily. The present pastor is Dr. Glenn S. Hartong.

#### **First Congregational Church**

The First Congregational Church of Belle Plaine was organized in March, 1866, at the home of J. P. Henry by the Rev. S. P. Ladue, then pastor of the Irving Congregational Church. Rev. Ladue had preached the Sunday morning service for several months. The meetings were held wherever a place could be found; often in a store building, sometimes at the hotel. The organization consisted of four members who all brought letters: Amosa Briggs, Mrs. Eliza Hart, Mrs. Caroline Henry and James P. Henry.

In the fall of the same year, Rev. Daniel Lane became pastor of the church. During the first winter the membership increased, the church was re-organized, and a full board of trustees and officers was elected. For a time, services were held in the Evangelical Church. In 1869, with the help of the Congregational Building Society, a church building was erected on Fourteenth Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues. This building saw nearly 40 years of service. Rev. Lane was pastor for seven years and often preached to people of the Irving Community in school houses in the rural areas. He also preached in the school house at Dayton.

Later, a lot was purchased at the

present site and during the pastorate of Rev. Osgood the present building was erected. The organ was a gift of the Reed and Blossom families and other memorials in the form of pulpit

furniture and stained windows were the gifts of Dr. J. B. Cox, Mrs. J. E. Mosnat, W. P. Herring and local railroad men. Dedication of the building was in February of 1906. The present parsonage was built in 1923. On March 28, 1916, the church celebrated its fiftieth anniversary and Mrs. J. P. Henry was honored as the only living charter member. In four years the church will celebrate its Centennial.

On October 13, 1960, the church voted to approve the constitution of the United Church of Christ and has been a part of that body since that date. The present pastor is Rev. Alvin Boettcher.

#### **Calvary Baptist Church**

On April 28, 1877, the First Baptist Church of Belle Plaine was organized with eight charter members. The first church building was erected on the southeast corner of Eighth Avenue and Ninth Street at a cost of \$2,500. The first pastor was Rev. J. W. Daniels. This church grew to a membership of 152 members with W. S. Herring as Sunday School superintendent. In the years following 1900 the church declined and for many years ceased to exist in the city.

On Sept. 14, 1961, Reverend Gordon Silcox was issued a call to pastor the

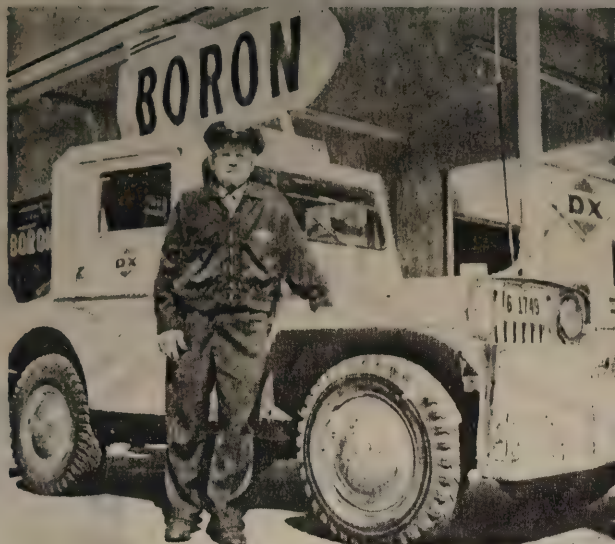


**Congregational Sunday school class in the early 20's. Left to right, back row, Neil Strawhorn, Russell Moyer, Lorenzo Collins, Anna Van Deest, Sam Van Deest, Harold Webster, Dan Stok. Front row: Don Trueblood, Orlo Benner, Bob Hancock, Earl Park, Jim Strawhorn, Tom Shirley, Norman Anderson.**









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Dr. Strandberg died Mar. 20, 1951. His son-in-law, Dr. John Janss, took over the establishment and practice in June of 1951, upon his graduation from Veterinary Medicine from Iowa State University at Ames.

Dr. Janss assisted Dr. Strandberg during summer vacations. They also shared the hobby of woodcraft.



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**First Lutheran Church.**

present Baptist Church in Belle Plaine. Calvary Baptist Church was organized in the fall of 1960. Upon the arrival of the present pastor, Rev. Silcox, there were 11 charter members. The present membership at this writing is 30. Calvary Baptist Church is known as the church of old fashioned preaching and friendly people. The Baptist Church has no building at this time and meets in the basement of Hart Memorial Library.

#### **First Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod**

The beginning of Lutheranism in Belle Plaine dates back to 1900 when Pastor Phillip Studt of Luzerne attempted to establish a church here. Because the group was small they were invited to attend services at Luzerne. In 1906 another attempt by Rev. G Schroeder of Luzerne failed. In 1924 Pastor H. Bohndoff of Luzerne held the first service in the home of Mrs. Conradine Roehr with ten people present. Increasing attendance brought a decision to rent the National Hall for services to be conducted in English rather than German. The first confirmation class consisted of the following: Martin Munson, Arthur Roehr, Mildred Stammer, Irene Siemke, Lillie Grieder and Minnie Grieder.

On July 26, 1925, official organization of First Lutheran Church took

place with the following charter members: Herman Grieder, E. A. Stammer, J. F. Stammer, Henry Jahnke, Richard Jahnke and Clarence Iverson. In 1926 and 1927 services were held in Driscoll's Chapel and in June of 1928 the congregation moved into the church that it now occupies and was served by Rev. F. Starke of Lu-



**Young Married group of First Lutheran Church, Belle Plaine, about 1951, first row, left to right, seated on ground, Marsh girl, Lindley Janes, Wayne Share, Marsh boy, Wayne Jensen. Front row, Muriel Shellenberger holding Steven, Gayle Janss, Norma Jean Siemke, Maxine Marsh, Verna Janes, Arlene Rabe, Naomi Wieck, Arlene Jensen and Ruth Share. Standing, Elmer Shellenberger, Gerald Share, Albert Siemke, George Marsh, Charles Rabe, Elmer Janes, Pete Janss, Ernie Wieck and Harold Jensen.**

zerne. Student Alvin Starke served the congregation from 1935 until 1937 when Pastor Lester Peter became the first resident pastor. Rev. W. S. Wendt was installed as pastor in 1944 and in 1945 the congregation became a self-supporting congregation and from that time has been debt free. In 1947 a new addition and basement were dedicated. Rev. Walter Schlie was installed as pastor in 1952 and served until 1959. Under his leadership plans were made for the future in the form of a building fund which has grown steadily since that time.

Rev. L. M. Stacy was installed as pastor in 1959 and serves the congregation now as their spiritual leader. At present there are 237 communicant members and the church continues to grow.

#### **St. Michael's Catholic Church**

Prior to the establishment of St. Michael's parish of Belle Plaine, priests from Cedar Rapids, Tama, Norway and Chelsea ministered to the spiritual needs of the people. In the early days the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered once a month in different Catholic homes. The coming of the Chicago and North Western Railroad, with the shops and the fertility of the soil surrounding Belle Plaine, were responsible for an increased population. This increase brought with it a proportionate number of Catholic families, and as a result, private homes no longer provided sufficient room for those who attended the monthly mass. Arrangements were made to use the public school building and mass was offered there until the first church was built.







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(Signed)

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**St. Michael's Catholic Church.**



**1937 summer school class at St. Michael's Church, Father Flynn at center rear.**



**Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witness.**

The year 1885 saw the completion of the new church. Father Michael Meagher, pastor at Tama, undertook this task. The church was a frame building and was located at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Seventh Street. Later the church was moved to 910 Eighth Avenue.

The first resident pastor was Father Henry Meyers, who served from 1907 to 1914. The parish house was a rented home at 804 Seventh Avenue. When the church was moved a rectory adjacent to the church was acquired.

Father H. A. Wilberding succeeded Father Meyers and under his pastorate a building fund was started and two lots on the corner of Ninth Avenue and Thirteenth Street were purchased. Another adjacent lot was later secured by Father E. S. Flynn who succeeded Father Wilberding on January 31, 1926.

Work was begun on the new church in the spring of 1927 and in November, 1927, the Most Rev. Archbishop James J. Keane said the last mass to be offered in the old church. On the same day, Nov. 22, the Archbishop dedicated the new church, blessed the parish house, assisted from the throne at the first solemn mass, and preached the first sermon in the new church. The Archbishop also administered the sacrament of confirmation.

Father E. S. Flynn has passed the 35-year mark in service to St. Michael's parish and in September of 1962, will celebrate the 45th anniversary of his priesthood.

#### **Assembly of God Church**

The above church has been located on Sixteenth Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues and is served by Ronald C. Renfer.

#### **Jehovah's Witnesses**

On November 4, 1961, Kingdom Hall of the Jehovah's Witnesses was dedicated. It was built by volunteer labor of the congregation. The building is located at 502 Eighth Street and the congregation is served by N. T. Levas.

#### **Christian Science Society**

The Christian Science Society of Belle Plaine was begun in 1906 by Jacob and Marie Bohr and Mr. and Mrs. Crosby. Others joined the group and in January of 1911 a small group organized as a Branch of the Mother Church in Boston.

Meetings were held in private homes, other meeting places, and the Driscoll Chapel. On June 17, 1929, the property at 1405 Ninth Avenue was purchased and the first services were held in the remodeled building on September 29, 1929. Dedicatory







— 1892 —

Funeral Director Peffers, looking back on his 35 years in the funeral profession, (23 years having been spent in Belle Plaine) has experienced many changes and believes that, along with the technical advances which have come in his profession, the increase in service offered has been one of the biggest changes and one of the most important advances.

"Dedicated to a Greater Service"



— 1962 —

## Sweet Residence becomes Funeral Home

The original home was built by Sidney S. Sweet in 1892.

It was sold by Charles A. and Caroline Sweet in 1929 to Jess L. Driscoll to be used as a Funeral Home.

On March 1, 1939, it was purchased by Byrle C. Peffers. Extensive remodeling has been done over the years.



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**Christian Science Church.**

services were held on April 15, 1934. Charlotte Fullmer serves as first reader and Mabel Naylor as second reader.

Chapter 14

## History of Belle Plaine Public Schools

During the winter of 1862-63, two small schools were taught in Belle Plaine, one by Mrs. Greene, and the other by Mrs. Pillbeam, wife of a Methodist circuit preacher.

The Independent School District of Belle Plaine was organized September 4, 1865, by the election of the following school board: Dr. John Stowe, president; Presley Hutton, vice-president; D. C. Twogood, secretary; Peter Hafer, E. G. Brown and A. Steinackle, directors. A room for school purposes was rented from Mr. Daniels at the rate of \$13 per month, and D. A. Kennedy was employed to teach the school. The enrollment soon increased to the extent that an assistant was needed, and on Christmas Day following district organization, Miss Cupid was employed as assistant. The board prescribed the following textbooks to be used: McGuffey's Readers, Pinnio's Grammer, Ray's Arithmetic, Monteith and McNally's Geography.

The first school building, authorized at the school election in March, 1866, was completed at a cost of \$1,500,

during the fall of 1867 with three rooms, two below and one above constructed on the same site as the present high school. In September of 1870, the principal was directed to have the school graded. The Belle Plaine graded school monthly report in December of 1871, lists the following subjects offered in the curriculum under Principal H. E. Warner: reading, orthography, writing, geography, history, grammar, algebra, Latin, philosophy and German.

A brick grade school building, known as the South School and later Long-



**Original High School building, looking east.**

fellow, was erected in 1879 at a cost of \$10,500.

Somewhere in the period of time between 1870 and 1878, three years of secondary work was introduced into the curriculum. U. B. Sanders was the



**Longfellow School, replaced by new Longfellow.**



**Former Assembly of God Church, purchased by Belle Plaine Community School District to be used as a classroom for retarded children.**







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Belle Plaine, Iowa





principal in 1877-78. In 1881, another school building was erected on the same site and was known as the North School Building. One year was added to the high school, giving Belle Plaine a 12-year school. The members of the first graduating class in 1882 were Nellie A. Cook, Fannie M. Filkins, Lillie Kostomlatsky and Clara B. Read.



1912 High School which burned.

The North School Building was torn down and replaced with a modern building in 1912. The new building consisted of 15 classrooms, an auditorium, a library, three offices, and a gymnasium equipped with dressing rooms and showers. This building was gutted by fire on January 1, 1921. Within the year construction was begun on a new high school. The same walls were used and plans of the former building were followed rather closely. Definite provisions were made for domestic science and agriculture departments. The gymnasium was rebuilt and used as such until 1938 when a new building was erected to the southeast of the high school building. This includes the present Lee Elementary School and a gymnasium-auditorium. The old gymnasium was then remodeled for the use of the industrial arts departments.



High School and Gymnasium and Lee School.



Top: Whittier School, now the site of Wilfred Drahos' home.

Bottom: Emerson School, present site of Funk Plant.



Two other elementary buildings were at one time in use in Belle Plaine. One was the Whittier Building erected in 1901 (located on the lot now occupied by the Wilfred Drahos home) and used until 1938 when the pupils were transferred to the Central Building. The other building, Emerson, located in the southwest section of the city (now Funk

Bros. Seed Co. Research building) was erected about 1900, and used as an elementary school until 1933 when it was abandoned and the pupils were transferred to the Longfellow Building. Both the Whittier and Emerson Buildings contained four rooms, two rooms below and two above.

The voters of the Independent School District of Belle Plaine on January 31, 1955, approved bonds to erect two new elementary buildings, which, when completed cost a total of \$300,000. The first building constructed and occupied in September, 1956, was the new Longfellow Building, and the old Longfellow school was torn down. New Longfellow houses grades kindergarten through sixth and it also provides office facilities, nurse's quarters, hot lunch kitchen which serves all four schools, and an all-purpose room with a stage. The second building, which was later named Lincoln, was built on lots 1509 and 1511 Ninth Avenue. The building joins the new playground to the east, and houses rooms for kindergarten, three elementary class sections, office, store rooms, instrumental music department and vocational agricultural classroom-lab and farm shops.

The Belle Plaine Independent School District, until July 1961, was one of the few remaining independent unconsolidated districts in this section of Iowa. Three school reorganization elections were held before a successful vote made the district and area serviced, a community school. The first election was held May 6, 1958, and the second election, April 11, 1960. The third election held October 10, 1960, was successful in uniting the Belle Plaine Independent District with adjacent areas in Benton, Iowa, Poweshiek and Tama Counties totaling 93 1/16 sections of land. The newly reorganized Belle Plaine Community School District became effective July 1, 1961, under the direction of the following board of education officials: Paul Schild, president; Leonard Benesh, Frank Hlavacek, Lester Musel, Laurence White, directors; Blanche Clelland, secretary, and Ferne F. Throndsen, treasurer.

The Belle Plaine High School has for many years been among the state's leading educational institutions. It has been accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools since 1914, a year after the Association was organized.

Two teachers were employed in the Belle Plaine schools for over half a century. Miss Harriet Brand, who started her teaching career in 1881, was employed for 63 years. She taught in the primary until 1935 and then served as high school librarian until 1945. The other lady, Miss Leona Wilcoxon,





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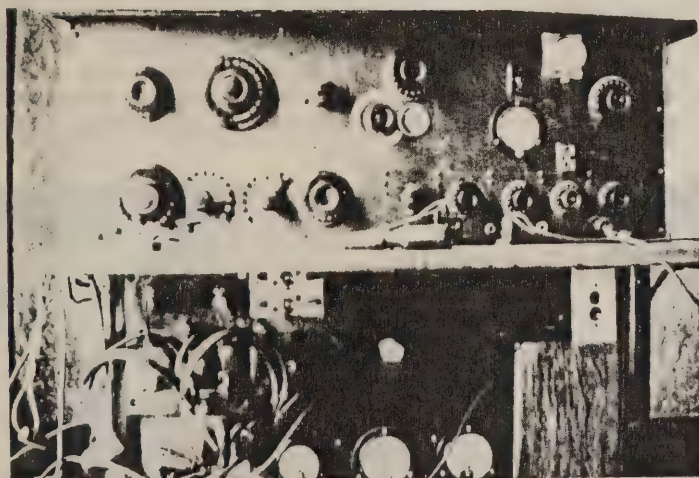
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**Top: Lincoln Elementary**

**Bottom: New Longfellow School.**



taught sixth grade in the Longfellow building for 53 years. Miss Addy Firkins taught in the elementary for over 45 years.

The Belle Plaine Community School District has a personnel of 65 employees, including superintendent of schools junior-senior high school principal, elementary principal, secondary guidance director, 21 instructors in junior-senior high school, 21 elementary teachers, a school nurse, the school clerk, three office secretaries, ten custodians and/or bus drivers and four hot lunch cooks.

Enrollment incorporating the students in the area of Belle Plaine Community School District is approximately 1,000 pupils, 440 in junior-senior high school and 560 in kindergarten through sixth grade.

Belle Plaine Community High School program of studies for 1962-63 is as follows:

Freshman: \*English I, \*algebra I, general math, \*physical science, \*home-making I, \*industrial arts, \*agriculture I, \*physical education, Latin I, biology, art I and world geography.

Sophmores: \*English II, geometry, biology, Spanish I, world history, typing I and/or personal typing, homemaking II, agriculture II, drivers education, Latin I, general business, algebra I, drafting I and art I or II.

Juniors: \*English III, \*American history, typing I or II, general business, shorthand, bookkeeping, Spanish I or II, chemistry, applied science, speech, agriculture III, art II, advanced algebra, drafting I or II, industrial arts II, home-making II.

Seniors: \*English IV, \*American problems, bookkeeping, Spanish II, physics, industrial arts III, applied science, agriculture IV, art II, advanced algebra, homemaking III, drafting II, speech, and office practice.

\*Required subjects.

Other electives are: French I and II, Latin II, college algebra and trigonometry and homemaking IV.

A list of the administrators for the schools from 1886-1962 are: J. W. Sampson, 1886-1891; S. B. Montgomery, 1891-1898; F. B. Lawrence, 1898-1903; W. J. Dean, 1903-1910; Arthur Crane, 1910-1916; G. S. Wooten, 1916-1919; J. R. McVicker, 1919-1923; Robert B. Lee, 1923-1927; S. W. Christian, 1927-1928; C. B. Whelpley, 1928-1931; M. L. Morris, 1931-1943; A. W. Langerack, 1943-1944; Dwight Erickson, 1944-1947; Frank Ralston, 1947-1950; and Gay W. Argo, 1950-.



**Longfellow teachers, left to right: Ruth Palmer, Isabel Kubela, Hattie Brand, Vlasta Herejk, Leona Wilcoxon.**



**Buckeye School, last country school in operation in Benton County, would have celebrated its centennial this year.**

Chapter 15

**The War Years  
in Belle Plaine**

**The Civil War**

Older residents of this area can well remember the days when Civil War veterans were numerous. As late as 1910 there were 34 members of the local Grand Army of the Republic Post. The





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High School Assembly, November 3, 1914.



Early Buckeye class, left to right: A. C. Palmer (teacher), Roy Ahrens, Frank Trueblood, Edward Koep, Robert Tippie, Harold Wehrman, Hilda Koep, Caroline Wehrman, Blanch Trueblood, Amanda Koep, Mabel Trueblood.

Civil War started in the same year that the railroad came pushing across the prairie land into this area. The early settlers were men of deep conviction and great lovers of freedom. They responded to the call of their country, met the challenge of war, and returned to waiting families and loved ones. We shall not try to chronicle the experiences of local veterans. We shall try to give some of the events of local interest which resulted from the war.

The John B. Hancock Post No. 314, G. A. R., Belle Plaine, was originally chartered April 21, 1884. It consisted of 20 charter members: John Montgomery, S. C. Leavell, S. R. Ferree, J. P. Henry, Joe Harbert, Thomas Brand, C. Wenz, M. V. Foote, E. E. Blake, J. C. Mattox, H. H. Greenlee, M. L. Prentiss, J. R. Cruson, A. Vosburg, J. G. Walker, C. C. Sullenberger, James Rucker, Noah Winslow, F. E. McCurdy and J. J. Chown.

Memorial Day originated after the War Between the States. In 1868, General Logan, commander-in-chief of the G. A. R., designated May 30 as a day to honor and remember the dead. It is interesting to note that some southern states observe other dates than May 30.

In Belle Plaine, in the week preceeding Memorial Day, an invitation was extended by the John B. Hancock Post and the Women's Relief Corps No. 130 to all soldiers and sailors of the war, to all sons of veterans, civic societies, school children and citizens to lay aside cares and labors and join them to pay a loving tribute to the dead who helped preserve our country undivided, our flag unsullied. All who could, were asked to bring flowers to the G. A. R. Hall on the morning of Memorial Day.

In the early afternoon a column formed in front of the G. A. R. Hall, and led by a drum corps or band, marched to an auditorium where services were held. These services usually included music by local vocal groups, a prayer by the chaplain of the day, a reading of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, reading of the Roll of Honor, an address by a speaker of repute, and closed with music. After the exercises the column again formed and marched to Oak Hill Cemetery where another address might be given. Then the G. A. R. Post and Women's Relief Corps observed the ritual service in honor of the unknown dead, and with the help of school children, decorated the graves of departed heroes. The column then reformed and marched back to the town and disbanded. A Marshall of the Day was usually appointed and led the column on horseback.

The sidewalk along Fourteenth Street from Thirteenth Avenue to Oak Hill Cemetery was placed there to accomo-







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We want to thank everyone who has sold or bought from our auction and sincerely hope that we can be of service to you in the future.







Civil War Veterans' Reunion at Montezuma, Iowa, 1901, 28th Iowa Volunteers. Third from left is Daniel Kennedy, fourth Bart Wilson, fifth John Wilson of Montezuma, sixth Noah Winslow, seventh John Montgomery. Others are unknown.



May 30, 1910. Those who can be identified tentatively are: 1. W. E. Hardy, 2. A. W. Crane, 3. J. C. Mattox, 4. S. C. Leavelle, 5. J. A. Herring, 6. M. L. Prentiss, 7. D. H. Wareham, 8. J. P. Henry, 9. Stephen Malcolm, 10. Thomas Marshall, 11. W. S. Masker, 12. F. B. Shurtleff, 13. Jack Elliott, 14. Joe D. Harbert, 15. R. O. Burrows, Sr.



Memorial Day group returning from cemetery along Fourteenth Street, G.A.R. in front.

date the people who made the long walk to the cemetery to honor the dead. Many a local resident has fond memories of John Milner on his horse marshalling the group, veterans and women marching, flags flying, and a general air of contained excitement.

In later years, when the number of Civil War Veterans dwindled, the veterans of World War I and the American Legion and Auxiliary took over the duties of Memorial Day. The Women's Relief Corps continues its proud traditions down to this day. Veterans of World War II have assumed some of the duties of Memorial Day but nothing today can compare with those early Memorial Day observances when youngsters grew up with a profound respect for the departed heroes of the wars past and a sure knowledge of what the day meant.

Belle Plaine's last surviving Civil War Veteran was Dr. W. A. Vincent. Charles Bistrickey was the last Spanish-American War Veteran.

### World War I

Immediately after the news of our entry into World War I came, Belle Plaine set about preparing for the work ahead. Young men volunteered or were called, bade families and friends fond farewells, and went to serve their country. Some did not return; they met death while fighting to make the world safe for democracy. The folks at home supported the war effort in many ways. Loan drives were successfully completed. Red Cross work was taken up. Farmers strove to increase production. Women took over men's jobs for the first time. The world watched and waited for the blessed news: Armistice. When that day came, the community burst forth in joy and relief. Children were dismissed from school to take part in the celebration. The railroad men had a huge flag which was paraded through the streets. The Kaiser was hanged in effigy; pandemonium reigned.

In the spring of 1919 we had a Victory Loan Drive. O. C. Burrows was the local chairman and he sent out the notice reproduced on page 89.

On November 3, 1919, Louie Prazak, first Commander of the American Legion Post here sent out from a mythical Camp Cootie, Belle Plaine, Iowa, the invitation reproduced on page 89.

The joyous reunion on that first anniversary of the armistice set the tone for the celebrations of the years to follow. There was usually an Armistice Day parade with Legionnaires and Auxiliary marching; the Women's Relief Corps took part; children were excused from school to attend the events. Speeches were scheduled at the Legion







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Old Brick  
Yard Hill

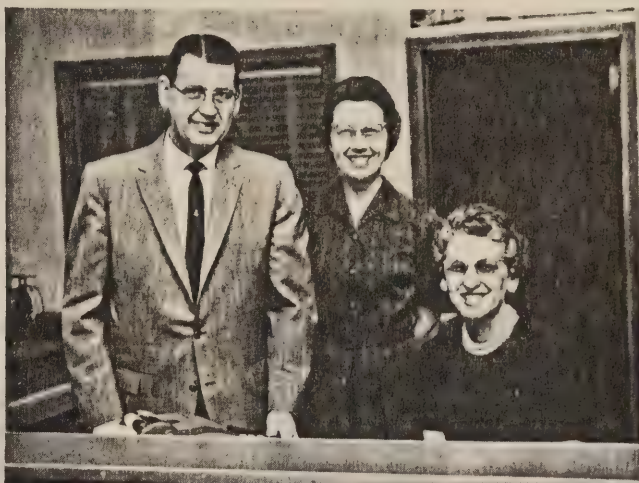


## We Are Always Here To Serve You !

Consult our Adequate Wiring Bureau  
for new construction or remodeling  
your old building . . .



J. Willard Shrader, Manager



Berwin Throndsen, Lavaun Edwards and  
Taloyre Clemmer

**IOWA ELECTRIC LIGHT & POWER**  
*Company*







In the early fifties a group of World War Veterans headed by Charles Hughes, Jim Herring, and R. O. Burrows, Sr., decided to form a "Last Man's Club" of World War I veterans. Since Armistice Day had become Veteran's Day and usually coincided with the opening day of the pheasant hunting season, it was difficult to get this group together on that day. It was decided to hold annual midday dinners at the Lincoln Cafe each Memorial Day and that group meeting has been held annually since that time. The group is strictly social; there are no officers; there are no dues; it is a stag affair.

According to one member's testimony the war is fought completely through each year, the menu has changed considerably in the last few years, and the amount of liquid refreshment consumed has been reduced by a sizable measure.

#### Jennings-Bradshaw Post No. 39

The local American Legion Post was chartered June 7, 1919, as John Jennings Post No. 39, and was named after the first serviceman from the community who lost his life in World War I. Original charter members

Form 120 A

## Chicago & North Western Railway Co. TELEGRAM.

Washington D C Nov 11th., 1918

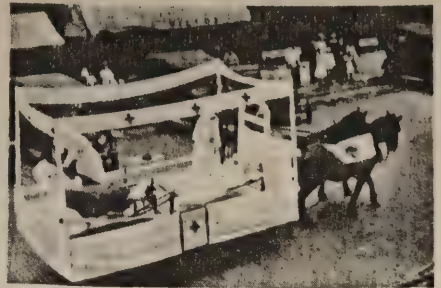
All

The Worlds War ends at 6 AM, Washington time, 11 o'clock Paris time

Armistice signed by German Representatives at midnight  
Announcement made by State Department 330 AM and Chicago associated press at 315 AM

Belle Plaine Ia Nov 11th  
335 AM

Copy of telegram sent to Belle Plaine announcing armistice.



Top: Bond Rally Parade, 1918-19.

Bottom: Parade 1918-19. One nurse is Winnifred Miller. Patients are Nathan B. Williams and Earl Feddersen.

Belle Plaine's last living Civil War Veteran at right, Dr. Vincent, Charles Bistrickey, Spanish-American War Veteran at rear, Mr. Willett, Tama County, at left.

Hall or at the opera house or theater, and a reunion of veterans took place. It was a custom for many years to gather in Dr. Snitkay's office to start the day out "right" and many are the tales told by Legionnaires about this annual ritual. A firing squad fired a volley at 11 A.M. at the intersection of Eighth Avenue and Twelfth Street, and a moment of silence was observed.

For many years there was a football game between Belle Plaine and Vinton on that date and those games were always hotly contested.

In 1954 Armistice Day was changed by Congress to Veteran's Day, a day to honor all veterans.



Present-day ceremony at Oak Hill Cemetery on Memorial Day.



Another Red Cross float from 1918-19 parade.

were: Charles E. Hughes, Charles Rowland, T. H. Malcolm, N. J. McGinness, James A. Herring, George R. Craft, John Milner, William Cuniff, Andrew Feddersen, Edward Snyder, Amos





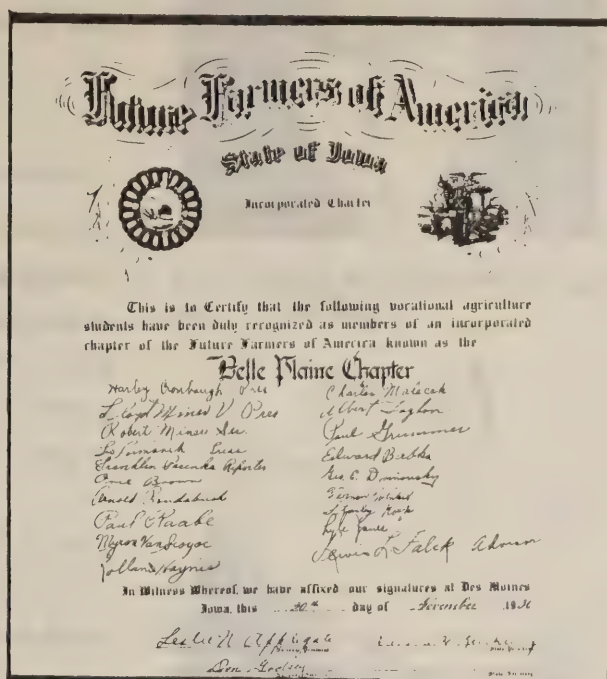
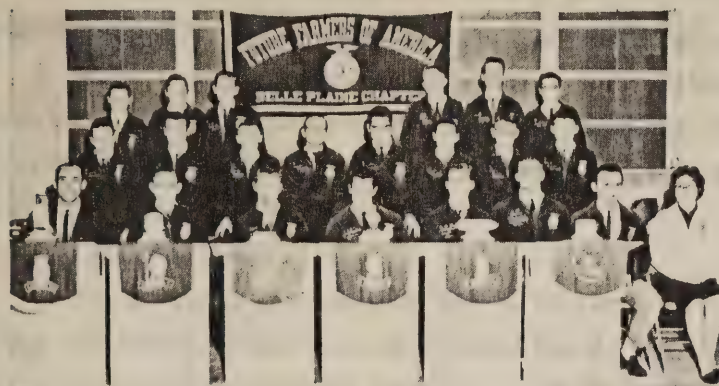


🏠 Belle Plaine's first place State Activity Exhibit at 1962 convention.



The Belle Plaine Chapter Future Farmers of America was organized November 20, 1930, under the direction of Lewis L. Falck. In this chartering organization there were 17 members with Harley Cronbaugh acting as first president. Down through its years in existence, Belle Plaine has produced 13 Iowa State Farmers which are listed as: Robert Grummer-'34, Robert Johnson-'41, Eugene Grummer-'42, William K. Kern-'44, Darrell F. Krafka-'44, Dale Studt-'45, Sylvester Kalina-'46, Donald K. Beck-'47, Ernest Kithcart-'56, Larry Beyer-'58, Larry A. Musel-'61, Russell Johnson-'61, and Dan D. Cronbaugh-'62. In 1942 Belle Plaine received a Gold Emblem award in the State FFA Public Speaking Contest. Also, in 1948, Donald Beck served as First Vice President in the Iowa Association FFA. During the 1962 FFA Contests, Belle Plaine received a Gold Emblem award on its Chapter Exhibit, in the State FFA Corn Harvest Safety Campaign—ranking third out of 120 chapters, and Larry A. Musel ranked second in the State Dairy Farming Contest. Also, in the fall of 1961 Belle Plaine was awarded the Iowa State FFA Championship at the Waterloo Dairy Cattle Congress—Robert Burroughs was high individual judge in this contest. Belle Plaine placed two members in the Silver Emblem grouping at the 1962 State FFA Convention—Jack DeMeyer, Reporter's Record Book, and Harry Popelka, Treasurer's Record Book. Donald Jensen received a Bronze Emblem award in the Freshman Creed Speaking Contest at this 1962 event. From 1953-1961, D. G. Bussey was local advisor to the Belle Plaine FFA Chapter and at the present time, John H. Cairns is the local advisor. Belle Plaine's listing of Honorary Chapter Farmers includes: G. W. Argo, Orrie Brown, R. O. Burrows, Jr., D. G. Bussey, Lewis L. Falck, Paul Groszkruger, Tom Janss, Alfred Lahn, Lester Musel and Andrew Wilson.

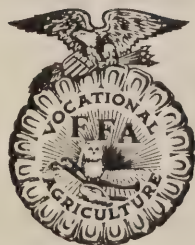
🏠 Supt. G. W. Argo, 1962 Honorary Chapter Farmer with Terry Rieck and Bob Burroughs.



🏠 The Greenhands

#### FFA MOTTO:

- Learning to Do
- Doing to Learn
- Earning to Live
- Living to Serve



Chapter Farmers ➡



## BELLE PLAINE FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA CHAPTER





TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
**VICTORY LOAN DRIVE**

Office of O. C. BURROWS, Local Chairman

Belle Plaine, Iowa, April 15, 1919.

Say, Fellows:—

Saturday, April 19th is going to be celebrated in Belle Plaine as Victory Day in order to create a little patriotism, so that we may go "Over the Top" in a hurry on the Victory Loan Drive which opens Monday, April 21st, and we would like to have you appear in uniform on that day to help us put it over.

There are to be three car loads of war relics, (tank, airplanes, captured guns, etc.) here for several hours in the morning, and at 2 o'clock p. m. we are going to form at the corner of 8th Avenue and 13th Street to put on a military Parade and a Formal Guard Mount on Main Street. Then from 8 to 12 o'clock p. m. there is to be a Military Ball at the National Hall to which all men in uniform and their ladies will be admitted FREE. Absolutely NO MEN but those in uniform allowed on dance floor, so wear 'em!

Hunt's Saxophone Military Orchestra will furnish the music.

*Anna J. Finch*  
*John Jennings*  
COMMITTEE

Copy of Victory Loan Drive notice after war.

**CAMP COOTIE, BELLE PLAINE, IOWA**

November 3, 1919

To:- Doughboys, Gobs, and Leathernecks.

From:- John Jennings Post No. 39, American Legion.

Subject:- First Annual Celebration of The Signing of the Armistice.

1. You are cordially invited to be with us on November 11th, 1919 to help us celebrate and commemorate the One Big Day of our lives.

2. At 10 A. M. You are ordered to report at the National Hall to clear these charges against you; A. W. O. L., Shooting Craps, Dirty Mess Kit, G. O. 45, other charges to numerous to mention. (Bring your bones, black jack decks and other arms. No ladies). Chow at 11:30 A. M.

3. The afternoon entertainment will be held in the Opera House. Bring your wives, mothers, sweethearts and the old man.

4. Do not fail to attend the one big event of the day. Hunt's Saxophone Band will play those soothing, seductive melodies while we dance at the National Hall.

Louis Prazak, Commander,  
Robert O. Burrows, Adj.,  
John C. Milner Jr., O. D.

P. S. No K. P., No Guard Duty, No Brig. Watch the Bulletin Board.

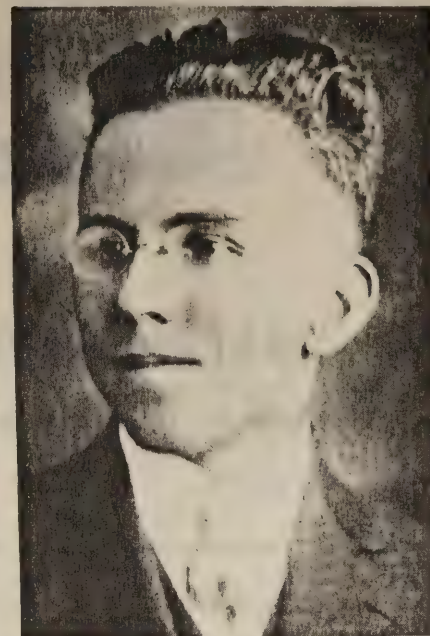
P. S. S. Come in Your Civies.

P. S. S. S. Bring this with you

Copy of invitation sent out to all veterans on first year after Armistice.



Early Armistice Day Parade, corner of Eighth Avenue and Twelfth Street.



John Jennings, first Belle Plaine casualty of World War I.

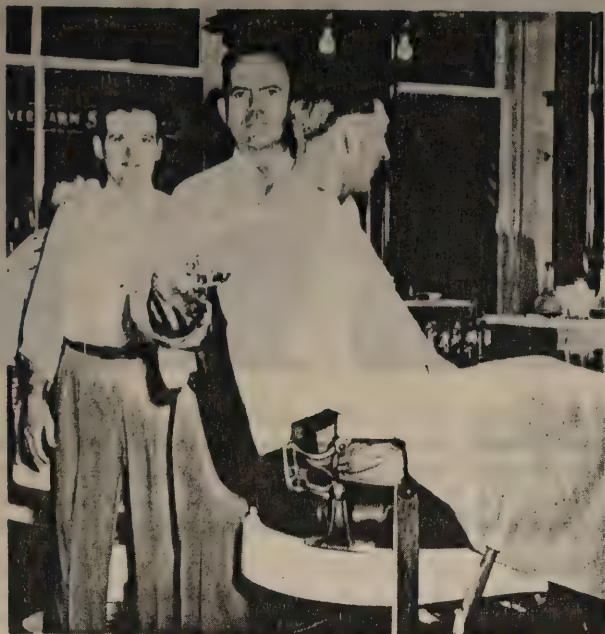


Harry Bradshaw, first casualty from Belle Plaine in World War II.





## SHIRLEY Barber Shop



We are one of the older ones . . .  
Leo has been a barber in Belle Plaine for  
32 years — Ken for 9 years.  
BELLE PLAINE

## Congratulations, Belle Plaine



## IOWA HOTEL

Mr. and Mrs. M. O. Shadewald

13th Street

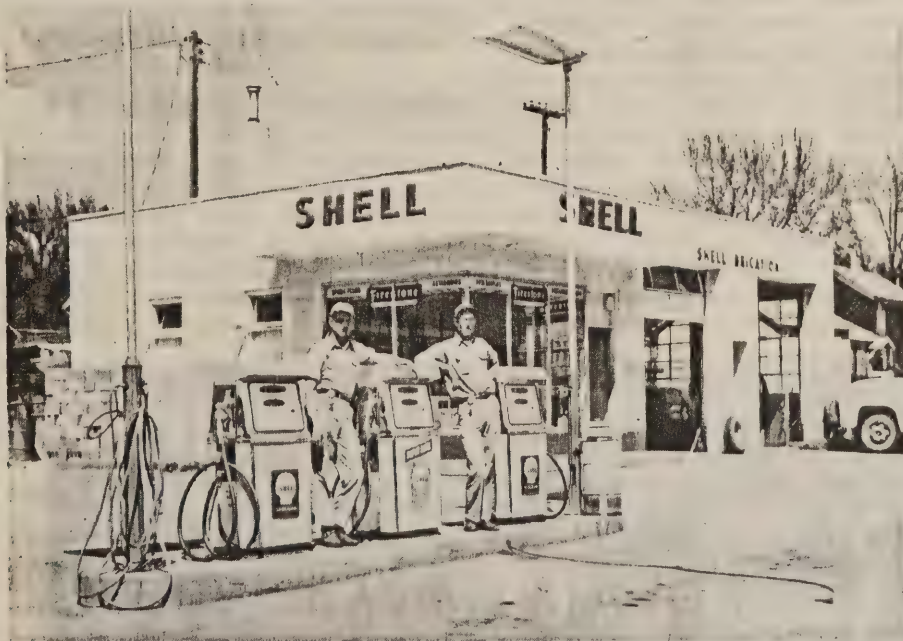
Phone HI 4-2780

## Here To Serve You Another 100 Years!

**TOPS**

**In customer  
satisfaction !**

**Stop in and  
See us !**



## A & M SHELL SERVICE

Hickory 4-2040

ACHIEL and MAURICE CORNELIS

Belle Plaine







**1958 group of 40-year veterans. Left to right front row: Sid Root, Sies Anderson, Robert Moore, Louis Prazak, Steve Kozik, Jessa Pettitt; second row: Charles Budd, J. S. Vifquain, Clifford Mall, Arthur Carlson; standing: R. O. Burrows, Sr., Clarence Feana, V. D. Vifquain, John F. Lahn, Arthur Porter, Roy Wright, William Houska, Edward A. Hoover, Archie McElroy, William Schroeder.**

Finch, C. W. Housman, Victor Vifquain, John F. Lahn, DeWitt Williams, R. H. Milner, and Harold McCandless. Louis Prazak was elected first Post Commander and R. O. Burrows was the first Post Adjutant, elected in August, 1919.

The name of the Post was changed to Jennings-Bradshaw Post No. 39 after the close of World War II in honor of Harry Bradshaw, first local serviceman killed in World War II. The post's first permanent home was the Emerson Building at Fourth Avenue and Eighth Street, purchased in 1946. In 1949 the present Legion home was bought. Present commander and adjutant are Harold Dailey and Dave Fish.

#### **American Legion Auxiliary**

On February 11, 1920, Post Commander Clifford Milner called a meeting of women eligible to membership in an auxiliary. An organization was formed with Mrs. T. H. Malcolm as temporary president. Application for charter was made by 42 women who became charter members of this auxiliary. The first meeting was held in the High School Building and officers elected on March 29, 1920, were: Mrs. G. W. Yavorsky, president, Mrs. James Park, vice-president; Mrs. D. H. Newland, secretary; and Miss Helen Vif-

quain, treasurer. Meetings were held in various locations until 1946 when the Legion bought the Emerson school building and the auxiliary met there until the present Legion Home was purchased in 1949.

This unit has Ladies In Blue who do volunteer work at the Veteran's hospital in Iowa City, and sponsors a girl for Girl's State.

In 1961 the eight Blue Lady volunteers served 984 hours. Three Blue Ladies have from 500-1,000 hours to their credit: Marguerite Pasler, Rosie Wirth, and Emma Moore. One Junior Volunteer, Norma Pettit, has 50 hours. The present Auxiliary President is Mrs. Beulah Birch.

#### **Years of World War II in Belle Plaine**

The years of World War II in Belle Plaine were years of readjustment and tension as in every other community in the United States. It was a time for raising foodstuffs, a time when our people went to nearby communities to work in war plants, and a time for raising money to finance the war. A

total of \$1,243,585.25 was collected in this community through Savings Bonds, plus the additional revenue from the post office in Savings Stamps, etc. By the end of January of 1942, the people of Belle Plaine had already invested some \$78,000 in freedom. In place of the usual summer celebration, a Bond Rally was held with a parade and speech by Major Frank Miles (editor of The Iowa Legionnaire). R. O. Burrows, Sr., was appointed War Finance Chairman for Belle Plaine. All of the merchants sold or gave bonds or stamps as prizes, and each individual was asked to pledge five per cent of his income for bonds. By the end of the year, one quarter of a million dollars had been collected. Early in the spring of 1942, Harlan L. Malcolm headed the War Finance committee for the community and the second and third war loan drives followed. In 1944 the fourth, fifth, and sixth loan drives were held and W. D. Little was Bond Chairman. The Seventh War Loan Drive was held from April to July of 1945 with Mr. Burrows again chairman. The title of Minute Men was given to groups of railroad men, business men and others who worked long and hard and purchased bonds themselves. The merchants closed business doors during rallies to enable the bonds to be sold without interference. Belle Plaine backed its service men and women 100 per cent.

After the first draft registration in October of 1940, when 307 young Belle Plaine men registered, many volunteered for a year's service under the new Selective Service Act. Jack Hix was the first man to be called for a year's service, only to be discharged in November of 1941, and recalled in December right after Pearl Harbor. Following Pearl Harbor, reserve officers living in Belle Plaine were called to active service; a second and then a third draft registration were held, and in May, 1942, all men between the ages of 18 and 64 were ordered to register.

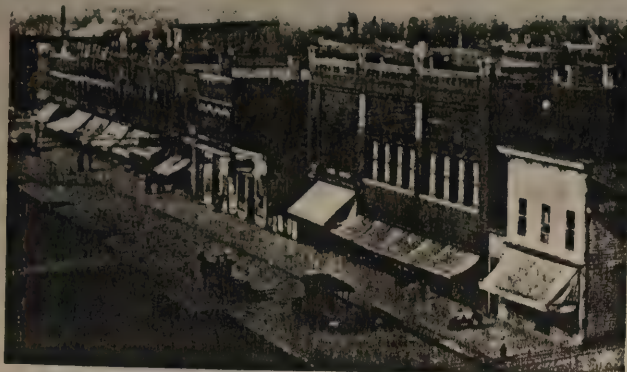


**Funk Bros. Seed Co., won the first Treasury T Flag in Benton County.**

**Parade in summer of 1942 to start off Bond Rally.**







About 40 years ago Belle Plaine  
looked like this.

**Congratulations to  
Belle Plaine on its  
Centennial**

**D. G. TIPPETT**

OPTOMETRIST

Phone HI 4-3280



In the early 1900's our street looked like this.

**Centennial Congratulations**

From The

**RIGHTWAY CLEANERS**

1939 ALWAYS THE BEST IN DRY CLEANING 1962

**HAROLD and MARTHA FRANKA**

Pickup and Delivery Daily

Phone HI 4-2706

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Pioneer family of merchants

from 1865 . . . .

**W. P. HANSON**

Gunsmith & Hardware

to 1962 . . . .

**STRAWHORN**

Hardware & Paint

— and still going strong !







By that date our streets began to show the lack of young men over 18. Many of our young women joined the services which for the first time were opened to them.

Scrap drives were held throughout the war to collect everything which could be vital to the war effort: aluminum, iron, rubber, nylon and silk hose, old phonograph records, etc. All the service clubs and organizations sent packages, mail and other incidentals to "our boys" . . . The Legion and Auxiliary, Women's Relief Corps, the North Western Club, The American Red Cross Chapter under Gretchen Andrews, the Navy Mothers Club with Mrs. Bess Burrows as its first commander, did sewing and knitting.

Many women began to replace men in jobs, in farm work and factory. Mrs. Evelyn McClurg became the first woman foreman of a detassling crew. The first firm in Benton County to win the Treasury Flag was Funk Bros. Seed Co. The Commerce Club staged a presentation ceremony on November 29, 1942 to honor the firm.

Harry Bradshaw, seaman first class. U.S.N. was the first Belle Plaine man to lose his life in World War II. He was missing in May of 1942, in the Battle of the Coral Sea and declared officially dead one year later, and in June of 1943 memorial services were held for him in Christ Methodist Church. Through the next three years Belle Plaine's Gold Star Honor Roll grew to include the names of Pvt. Gordon Allee, Pvt. Victor D. Birch, Pvt. Milvoy Blaha, Seaman 1/c Harry Bradshaw, Sgt. Dan Chehak, Pfc. Raymond Chekal, Ensign John Cherveney, Pfc. Frank Custer, Lt. Marvin Dillie, Pvt. Earl Garr, SF1/c Ferdinand Grantham, Pvt. George Grieder, Pfc. Lloyd Heller, Pfc. Richard B. Hines, Pfc. Lewis Jackson, T/Sgt. Everett E. Johnson, T/5 Lyle Kubite, Sgt. Albert Maeder, Pvt. Byron Oehlert, Sgt. George F. Schoening, Pvt. Marvin Shellenger, Pvt. Tom Shirley, Capt. Wallace F. Snyder, Pfc. Fred Wisner and Ensign Walter Haloupek, missing in action, later declared dead.

An organization of Gold Star Mothers was formed and The American War Dads and United Service Women's Club were formed to contribute to the health and welfare of our servicemen and women. A Committee of Civilian Defense carried out preparations for our safety in case of attack. Many of our young men were prisoners of war and mail was awaited anxiously.

Rationing was the rule of the day and applied to cars, tires, shoes, soap, meat, sugar and many other foodstuffs. The country and this little town buckled down for the fight and when V-E day and later V-J day came they were greeted reverently rather than hilar-

ously. Business houses closed; flags lined the street and prayers of Thanksgiving were offered in the churches. Of special significance to this community was the fact that V-E day came on the third anniversary of the death of our first casualty, Harry Bradshaw. V-J day was celebrated with the business houses being closed for a two-day holiday. Belle Plaine waited once more—for the return of her servicemen.

Chapter 16

## Organizations and Activities in Belle Plaine

Residents of large cities are always surprised at the variety of social and service groups to be found in a small town. These groups are all a very real part of small town life. We have not included the dozens of purely social groups that exist in addition to the ones whose histories follow. Nor have we included the many activities which are a part of the school life. The histories which follow have been provided by some member of each group.

### Artesia Chapter, D. A. R.

Artesia Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution was organized June 28, 1946, with 13 charter members: Minnie Guinn, Caroline Connor, Bess Burrows, Geneva McLennan, Mildred Snyder, Frances Nichols, Carol Froning, Abigail Winslow, Jennie Beck, Iona Blinkensop, all of Belle Plaine, Mrs. M. Z. Bailey, Lansing, Iowa, Mrs. Cleo Crew, Cedar Rapids, and Mrs. Ruth Wilde, Lansing.

The first organization meeting was attended by Mrs. R. P. Ink, State Regent, who installed the officers. Mem-

bers of Iowaco Chapter of Marengo were guests and took part in the installation service.

The name, "Artesia," was suggested by Mrs. Burdette Beck because of Jumbo Artesian Well for which Belle Plaine was famous.

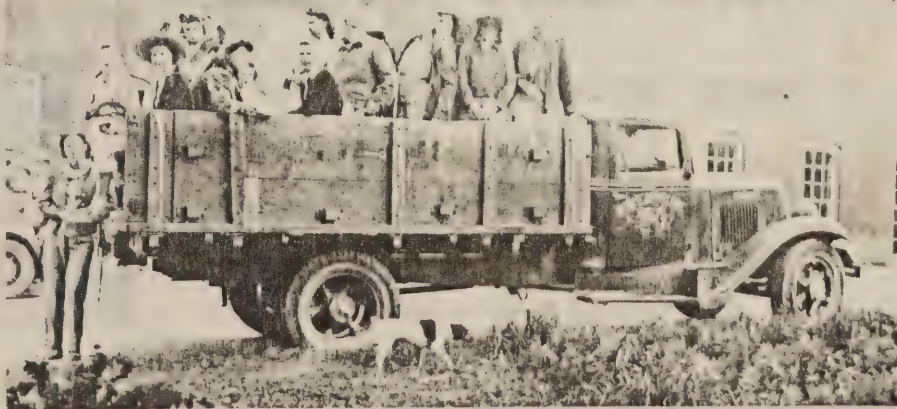
One of the outstanding accomplishments of the chapter was the purchase and dedication of a brass plaque on a native boulder at the site of Jumbo Well. It was through the efforts of a dedicated citizen and former mayor, the late C. R. Snow, that the boulder was located and placed at the site with the cooperation of our street commissioners. The program for the ceremony will be found in the section on Jumbo Well elsewhere in this booklet. The following members have served as regents: Mesdames Guinn, Connor, Burrows, Korn, Winslow, Strandberg, and Beck. The present Regent is Miss Joan Burrows.—Bess Burrows.

### Order of Eastern Star

Belle Plaine Chapter, No. 39, Eastern Star was organized by Mr. Thompson, Deputy Grand Master of Iowa Masons in October, 1873. The first officers were James Collister, Worshipful Patron; Julia A. Brown, Worshipful Matron; Mrs. H. Guinn, Associate Matron; Miss Cupid, treasurer, and Miss Sarah A. Brown, secretary.

Belle Plaine Chapter, No. 39, was later disbanded and Morning Star Chapter, No. 108, Order of Eastern Star, was formed under a charter issued by the Grand Chapter of Iowa, OES. September 14, 1892. Mrs. Eliza Caldwell was Worshipful Matron, Henry W. Van Dyke, Worshipful Patron.

The 1962 Officers of the Belle Plaine chapter are Mrs. Ruth Rieck, Worshipful Matron, Horace McLennan, Worshipful Patron, Mrs. Taloyre Clemmer, treasurer, Miss Alice Clemmer, secretary.—Alice Clemmer.



Evelyn McClurg with all-girl detasseling crew of 1942. Some of those identified: Dorothy Bevins, Lorene Leonard, Mary Hunt, Ruth Swalm, Marian Hall, Mrs. Pettit, Hope Sankot, Marilyn Shultz.





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**MR. AND MRS. LESTER FULLMER**

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Hickory 4-2259

P. O. Elberon, Iowa



## **Clover Farm Store**

"YOUR FRIENDLY GROCERY STORE"

HOME OWNED

We are Proud to be a part of Belle Plaine

MR. and MRS. ROBERT CHRISTMAN







**Rainbow Girls swimming party, 1939.**  
Left to right: Electa Groszkruger, Charlene Stettler, Mary Smith, Arline Smith, Joyce England and Marian Holland.

#### Rainbow Girls

The local Rainbow Assembly was organized November 28, 1925, with Mildred Driscoll as the first Worthy Advisor, Margaret Benner as Associate Worthy Advisor, and Bertha Collins as Mother Advisor.

The present Worthy Advisor is Karen Blount who will be succeeded by Jean Bostian. Florine Tippet is Mother Advisor. At the time of the organization there were 52 girls initiated and the Tama Assembly sponsored the local Assembly.—Flo Tippet.

#### Sincere Rebekah Lodge No. 59

Sincere Rebekah Lodge No. 59 was instituted June 10, 1889, with 37 members. The charter was granted by the Grand Lodge of Iowa on October 18, 1889. Meetings are held the second and fourth Tuesdays in the I. O. O. F. hall. In two years the Rebekahs will celebrate their Diamond Jubilee. Present Noble Grand is Marilyn Ealy.—Mildred Wilson.

#### Belle Plaine Lodge No. 151, I. O. O. F.

Belle Plaine Lodge No. 151 of the I.O.O.F. was instituted on July 11, 1867, and the charter granted October 17, 1867. The lodge has been at its present location on Twelfth street from the beginning. At present there are 78 members and Dr. Mark V. West is Noble Grand. Other branches of the order include the following: Rebekahs, the Encampment, the Patriarchs Militant with Ladies Auxiliary to the Encampment and Patriarchs Militant.—Mark West.

#### Chapter EI P.E.O.

Chapter EI of the P.E.O. Sisterhood was organized May 7, 1913, and will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year. There were 11 charter members: Minnie K. Henry, Louise H. VanScoy, Mabel Feddersen, Ada Nichols, Edith Smith Hupfer, Ella Miller, Florence Montgomery, Alice Noble Peterson, Clara Blossom, Hester Herring, and Ella VanScoy. The last surviving charter member, Mrs. Peterson, died this year. A total of 93 women have been mem-



**About 50 years ago this was a real ball team, the Razor Backs, all barbers.**  
Front: H. Quigley, C. Housman, B. Mas-ker. Back: C. Sievers, T. Ealy, M. Mar-ean, B. Kohut, R. Hyatt, George Irwin, A. Byers, R. Gordon.

bers of Chapter EI and in terms of continuous local membership Bess Wetherel and Dorothy McCune Stark have been members for over 40 years. Mrs. Anita Willey will soon celebrate 50 years of membership although she has not been a member locally for that entire period.

The P.E.O. Sisterhood is a charitable, educational and philanthropic organization and serves the community as well. Present officers are Jean Swailes, president; Mary Peffers, vice-president; Crystal Dreibelbis, corresponding secretary; Gladys Groszkruger, recording secretary; Helen Blanchard, treasurer; Isabel Shrader, chaplin; Catherine Burrows, guard, and Grace Morek, pianist.—Crystal Dreibelbis.

#### The Masonic Bodies

There are three Masonic bodies in Belle Plaine. Hope Lodge No. 175, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, was organized in June, 1865. The first meeting place was on the third floor of the hotel known as the Franklin House, situated on the northwest corner of Seventh Avenue and Twelfth Street. After several moves, Hope Lodge, in conjunction with Mt. Horeb Chapter No. 45 and St. Bernard Commandery No. 14, built the upper story over Nichols and Herejk's Drug Store. They remained at that location from 1873 until 1894. After the big fire of 1894 Hope Lodge traded a title with Edward Nichols for the present Masonic home.

The first master of Hope Lodge was W. C. Smith. The present master is Dr. H. K. Thomasson.

Mt. Horeb Chapter, No. 45, Royal Arch Masons, was chartered on July 11, 1868. The first High Priest was E. A. Bird and the present High Priest is Dr. H. K. Thomasson.

St. Bernard Commandery No. 14, Knights Templar, was chartered on October 19, 1869. The first Eminent Commander was B. R. Sherman and the present Eminent Commander is E. W. Comer.—H. K. Thomasson.

#### Royal Neighbors

The local Royal Neighbors of America organization was instituted on March 22, 1907, and was given the name of Belle City Camp No. 3462. At the original institution of this Camp there were 34 members who signed the charter. Margarette E. Howard is the only living charter member.

This organization is very active today and meets at the Library Club Room on the first Friday of each month at 8 P. M. Today The Camp has 47 benefit members and 22 juvenile members. These are members who hold Royal Neighbor Insurance. There are 35 social members who do not hold insurance but enjoy all the activities of the camp.—Betty Pettit.



**Patrician Club, for unmarried young men, before 1920.** First row, left to right: D. Miller, A. Powers, Dr. Whelan, R. Harden, "Choppy" Nichols; second row: unknown, unknown, "Dutch" Hall, J. Dinnie, C. Toennings, Christy Ryan, R. Marstellar, T. Malcolm, unknown.

#### Home Art Club

The Home Art Club was organized October 1, 1901, by Bertha Winslow, Jessie Rucker, Irene Janes, Nellie Martin and Blanche McKee with 25 members. First president was Myrtle Winslow and meetings were held monthly. There are 15 members at present with Fern Cronbaugh as president. Bertha Winslow, Nellie Martin and Jessie Rucker, all charter members, are still active in the club.—Hazel Kithcart.

#### Belle Plaine Garden Club

In February of 1928, with Mrs. F. E. Myerly as chairman, Mrs. J. Driscoll, Mrs. C. W. Burnham and Mrs. Miles Courter met to organize a garden club. Others were interested in the club and became early members: Dr. and Mrs. Hancock, Mr. and Mrs. Conklin, Mr. and Mrs. Burnham, Mrs. Severs, Mr. and Mrs. Shurtleff, Dr. and Mrs. Row-





## Centennial Congratulations, Belle Plaine !

- Hubbard and Gooch Feeds
- Swift's Flocks
- Me-Jon Liquid Feed-Fertilizer
- Delivery Service
- Feeding Advisory Service

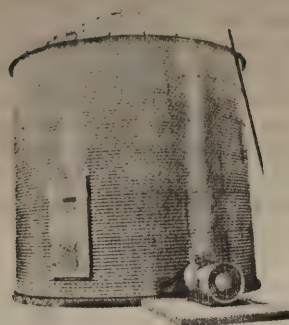
"CHUCK" and GLADYS

### SCHWAB FEED SERVICE

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708 12th Street

Belle Plaine, Iowa



LP Gas Heaters with up  
to 1,125,000 BTU.

### Baughman GRAIN STORAGE and DRYING BINS

- One-piece welded and bolted door frame (factory assembled)
- Extra strong tie bars across door opening
- Adjustable auger or scoop door-slat for easy grain removal
- Hill and valley bolting
- Roof sheets formed with deep box-rib channels for extra strength
- Heavy gauge galvanized steel roof hold-down straps
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## RIVER VIEW FARM

*Home of Better Hampshires*

Reserve Grand Champion in 1960 and 1961 at Iowa State Fair

and

Junior Yearling All-American of the United States in 1960

**Mr. and Mrs. ANDY SIEFKER**

Belle Plaine, Iowa





land, Mrs. Wheeler, Dr. and Mrs. Mattox and Mrs. Snitkay. First officers were Mrs. Myerly, president, Mrs. Burnham, vice-president, and Mrs. Conklin, secretary. The purpose of the club is to beautify homes and the city, including the parks, streets and alleys. The Belle Plaine Garden Club is a charter member of the Federated Garden Clubs of Iowa. On the 25th anniversary of the club it became a Blue Ribbon Club. This honor is given by the Federated

Clubs of Iowa and the requirements are: holding an annual standard show, various projects, attendance at flower judging schools and a garden library available to the public.

The hollyhock was adopted as the city flower and planted along unsightly alleys and vacant areas. Three Moline elms were donated by the club and planted in front of the library by H. Roy Mosnat. The Garden Club has planted trees in the South City Park and the

shrubbery at Williams Park. Mrs. F. E. Myerly was personally responsible for the Williams Park beautification. Oscar Soiney worked for several years on the improvement of the South City Park and many of the beautiful trees which now grace the area and afford abundant shade are a living memorial to his inspired work. Harry Swalm helped pick out and plant those trees. The C. C. C. also made many plantings.

Recent projects of the club have been plantings of flowering crabs at Hannon Park (southwest of Blairstown) and landscaping the Hart Library grounds. The club also sponsors a Junior Garden Club which trains and helps young people in all the arts of gardening.

Mrs. Jean Wright is the president of the Garden Club.—Frances Stettler.

#### Richardson Art Embroidery Club

This club was organized approximately 50 years ago and chose its name from a type of embroidery floss popular in those days. Early members still active are Mollie Dierks and Ruth Craig. The 1962 president is Marion Denny.—Dorothy Klink.

#### Friendly Neighbors Club

The Farm Bureau women in Iowa township began holding meetings in 1922 to receive lessons on homemaking from Iowa State University. First officers were: Helen Vifquain, Laura Wehrman and Blanche Trueblood Mall. The Friendly Neighbors group was formed in 1939 with Mrs. John Schild as president and Mrs. John Tatge as secretary-treasurer. Several members of the club have held township and county offices in the Farm Bureau, including Mrs. George Raabe, Mrs. Alfred Lahn and Mrs. Earl Leimberer.—Mrs. John Schild

#### Sunny Monday Club

This group was organized in March of 1939, with Mrs. Chester Benson as president, Mrs. Walter Rabe, secretary-treasurer and Mrs. C. W. Burnham and Nina Swatosh, leaders. The name for the club was suggested by Alice Hancock. The club grew rapidly and another group was formed, the Ditto Club. Present officers are Hazel McLeod, Ruth Grieder, Gladys Beyer.—Emma Rabe.

#### Ditto Club

The Ditto Club was organized January 28, 1941, and is another group which uses extension lessons from Iowa State University. Financial matters, health, family living, and home making are studied. First president was Minnie Guinn, secretary-treasurer Frances Nichols and leaders were Mynna Mattox and Catherine Ehlen. Present officers are Mrs. Carl Shogren, Mrs. William Behounek, Mrs. Joe Tague.—Mrs. Joe Tague



Ladies and gentlemen of the Garden Club. Men left to right: George Raabe, F. Myerly, H. R. Mosnat, T. Harvey, E. Swatosh. Ladies: Mrs. S. Harvey, Grace Gay, Ella Raabe, G. Dolezal, G. Strandberg, Mrs. Snitkay, L. Conrad, B. Myerly, Mrs. Baxter, E. Kollman, N. Swatosh, M. Denny.





# THE CITIZENS STATE BANK at BELLE PLAINE

member Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation



PAUL GROSZKRUGER, President



WESLEY MANSFIELD  
Vice President



ART J. BUCH  
Director



A Progressive Bank for a Progressive Community









Evening classes in vocational agriculture were started when L. L. Falck came into the Belle Plaine school system. According to Mr. Falck only four men (J. Schild, G. Raabe, Ed Swatosh, L. Koep) appeared for the first scheduled class but by the end of the year the class numbered almost eighty. It is interesting to note that many of the participants were town businessmen. After the meetings the group adjourned for volleyball and coffee. Here is the 1931 group which enjoyed those activities. First row, left to right: Frank Bardwell, G. McLeod, M. Beck, Ohlen, C. Formanek, F. Sankot, O. Schroeder, P. Koser, A. Buch, W. Grummer, E. Wheeler, J. Tatge, C. B. Whelpley, Supt., G. Studt, C. Burnham, R. Miller. Second row: M. Morris, Prin., H. McCandless, J. Weaver, W. Fisher, J. Schroeder, E. VanScoyoc, H. Smith, W. Jensen, F. McCulloch, J. Crawford, F. Holly, unidentified, A. Byers, L. L. Falck, instructor. Third row: A. Luckritz, G. Schild, L. F. Koep, B. Beck, R. Jahnke, R. Tippie, E. Hughes, G. Polka, unidentified, J. Tesar, L. Formanek, W. Conrad. Fourth row: E. Swatosh, M. Holland, J. Babke, unidentified, S. McCandless, G. Jensen, C. Roehr, F. Bardwell, Jr., C. Schild, E. Schild, H. Lannam. Fifth row: unidentified, L. Schild, B. Cronbaugh, J. Pacenka, M. Stolper, E. Tatge, G. Schoening, unidentified, R. Allers, F. McDonald, J. Bardwell. Sixth row: H. McLennan, R. Holland, G. Raabe, H. Berkheimer, L. Schild, F. Schild, H. Jensen, E. Meyer, E. Berkheimer, E. Jensen, C. Tippie.

#### Athena Club

The history of Athena Club dates back to the days when Chautauqua circles flourished in nearly every city and town of the Union. After the disbanding of the circle an interest in a history extension course was the basis for regular meetings. This interest lagged and fell victim to inertia when but three members were left. Mrs. Ann C. Jackson called a meeting to form a literary club and Athena Club was the result of this meeting held in October of 1897. Mrs. Jackson was unanimously elected president and held this office until 1901. During 1901 the club became federated. Athena Club has always supported all worthy civic projects and has contributed to the support of the library throughout the years. There are now 30 members. Laura Welch serves as president; Mardene Garling, vice-president; Hazel Carlson, secretary-treasurer.—Gretchen Strandberg.

#### Sorosis Club

The year 1962 marks the 60th anniversary of the founding of Sorosis Club by Mrs. Minnie Henry and Gertrude



Iowa Ever-Ready 4-H group about 1938, left to right: D. Ditzler, L. Rabe, M. Vileta, N. Schroeder, M. Koep, A. Tatge, A. Kluss, R. Jensen, L. Wehrman, H. Pfingsten.

Ahrens. First officers were Rose McCune, president; Mrs. Leekins, vice-president; Stella Bardwell, secretary and Minnie Henry, treasurer. The club was formed to further cultural study among its members. Projects of the club have been many and varied. Soro-

sis helped establish the reading room and has always supported the library. The first drinking fountains were installed downtown by their efforts. During both wars the club devoted many hours to sewing, knitting and Red Cross work. A piano was donated to the high school in 1922.

THIS PAGE SPONSORED BY ATHENA CLUB AND SOROSIS CLUB





# Meet the present-day employees of the CITIZENS STATE BANK



from the left:  
M. D. Dreibelbis  
Ferne Throndsen  
Carleton Groszkruger



from the left:  
Minnie Trimble  
Beverly Lahn  
Karmen Heller  
Janice Vavroch



from the left:  
Judith Kenner  
Darlys Rieck  
Darlene Garling  
Nelda Ranfeld







1925 School Band directed by R. W. Macy. Cornets: E. Park, O. Schuchert, G. White, R. Hart, A. Sullivan, P. Raabe, L. Beam, E. Polka, A. Lyman; baritone: L. Harper, K. Wood; saxophone: D. White, L. Fisher, L. Osborn, W. Walton, L. Crittenden, D. Campbell; trombone: T. Shirley, J. Strawhorn, J. Lebeda, L. Palmer, H. Beaver, R. Rucker; alto horn: J. Guinn, B. Riley, W. Beaman; drum: C. Holmes, M. Stok, R. Hancock, L. Hoover; clarinet: D. Stok, C. Corns, J. Lebeda, E. Adams, M. Stout; bass horn: L. Franka, D. LaDage.

Social affairs have been varied and original. The 25th anniversary of the club was observed with three charter members in attendance: Mrs. Rose McCune, Mrs. C. J. Snitkay, and Mrs. A. E. Feddersen. The club recently celebrated its 60th anniversary. Present officers are: Lydia Frazell, president; Blanch Clelland, vice-president; Marianne Kollmorgan, secretary, and Katherine Frowning, treasurer.—Louise Conrad.

**Longfellow**

**Parent-Teachers Association**

The Longfellow Parent-Teachers Association was formed by the parents of the Longfellow students under the guidance of Reverend O. C. Gatrell in the spring of 1934.

During the first year Mrs. A. R. Nichols and Mrs. Bert England served as president.

Before the new Longfellow building was built, the P.T.A. held meetings in classrooms in the old school and served lunches in the basement which had a dirt floor with limestone walls and had neither water facilities nor stoves.

In 1940, the P.T.A. sponsored hot lunches for the students of Longfellow school. In 1951 a kitchen and dining room were equipped with tables, stove, cupboards, dishes, etc. There was no heat except the warmth from the kitchen stoves.

Over the years many projects have been sponsored by the P.T.A., all aimed at the betterment of facilities for the

children: piano for the school, N. Y. A., hot lunches, kitchen and dining room equipment, playground equipment, and a curtain for the stage of the all-purpose room in the new Longfellow. Projects supported by the P.T.A. have been financed with bake sales, chili suppers, plays, and carnivals. In recent years records and encyclopediae have been purchased. Each year the teachers suggest needed facilities for the school program and the P.T.A. tries to supply them. In February, Founder's Day is observed and all past presidents honored.

Mrs. Adda Kuelper, a longtime member, was honored for her contribution to the community by being presented a certificate naming her "Kernel of the Iowa Tall Corn," from the Press Columnists of Iowa.

The present officers are: Mrs. James Pech, president; Mrs. Lawrence Tesar, vice-president; Mrs. David Fish, treasurer; Mrs. Lawrence Hoover, secretary, and Mrs. Achiel Cornelis, historian.—Mrs. Lawrence Hoover.

**Band Boosters**

Band Boosters were organized in January of 1946 to help provide the band with new uniforms, music and instruments, and to help pay the expenses for contest and band tour transportation. At the close of the first year there were 350 members in the group and Mrs. Ray Bradshaw served as first president. Dues were 50 cents per per-

son and the band director at the time was Robert Dean. The first year's project was supplying the band with new uniforms and the group sponsored the Harlem Trotters as a money-making project.

Meetings are held the first Monday of every month and, since their founding, the group has replaced uniforms, bought instruments, purchased a complete new set of uniforms, tape recorders, music, and other incidentals to augment the instrumental music program. Each year Band Boosters birthday calendars are sold to raise funds.

The incumbent president is Mrs. Earl Park and the instrumental instructor and band director is James A. Coffin.—Virginia Bergert.

**Scouting in Belle Plaine**

Pack 41 of the Cub Scouts is in charge of Keith Bevins, Cub Master, who will be followed by Albert Kalina. The following are den mothers and assistants of the seven cub dens: Wilma Bevins, Marian Daily and Marcella Van Nevel, Arleen Storm and Crystal Dreibelbis, Janice Bryant, Catherine Miner and June Barnes, Betty Tesar, Dorothy Drahos. Katherine Fish is the local Cub Scout secretary, Robert Gillen, treasurer. Lyle French is Rotary sponsor and the local committeemen are: Wayne Bryant, Floyd Mapes and Albert Kalina.

Explorer Post 91 of Belle Plaine for boys of high school age was organized







## Before The Days Of The Me Too Supermarket!

In the olden, golden days of 1862 you couldn't stop at the corner store for a can of beans . . . there weren't any cans. Customers then were lucky if they had a hundred items from which to choose, and the only fresh things you could find were the clerks. All foods were supplied in barrels, bags, and boxes, and clerks had to weight each purchase separately. (Not the most sanitary method). There were no fresh fruits and vegetables except those which were home-grown. Fresh meat could be had only at the time an animal was slaughtered, and the remainder had to be pickled or salted down to prevent spoilage . . . and housewives then spent hours each day preparing and cooking meals which had very little variety, except from season to season.

### COMPARE THIS PICTURE WITH TODAY'S MODERN ME TOO STORE

In 1962, you have more than five thousand different varieties of foods at your finger-tips when you start shopping at Me Too. All your household needs are stocked for your convenience. You can economically purchase oranges from California, bananas from Honduras, celery from Arizona and radishes from Florida, all brought to you in excellent condition, due to modern storage and transportation systems. You'll find the choicest cuts of fresh beef and pork whenever you want them, and a large variety of cheeses and dairy products to help add variety and nutrition to your menus. If you get behind with the housework, some of the hundreds of convenience foods can be used to help you serve meals on schedule . . . frozen dinners, prepared

canned and packaged meals, dehydrated foods, canned meats and fish, and choicest canned fruits and vegetables all help you to serve extra-tasty meals in a hurry. If our great-great grandmothers could be around to see our modern stores, we doubt very much if they'd say, "Give me the good old days!"



## ME TOO

DON HUNT, Manager

— Belle Plaine —







**Orchestra, about 1930.** Some of those who could be identified: N. Anderson, L. Collins, C. Humes, N. Strawhorn, N. Anderson, D. Ringler, E. Yavorsky, W. Yavorsky, L. Cerny, S. Sweet, D. Stok, M. Marstellar, J. Schneck, M. Yavorsky, J. Guinn, C. Holmes, R. Ridenour, L. Wilson, H. Driscoll E. Park, E. Stok, C. Harper, B. Strawhorn, L. Palmer, R. Hammond, J. Strawhorn, E. Vermace, T. Shirley.



**Top: Champion drummers from the band contests of 20 years ago:** Gene Hunt, Steve Malcolm, John Warren, Charles Dvorak.

**Bottom: Champion clarinet quartette from 1942:** Henry Tippie, Jack Haloupek, Alan Fisher, Charles McLennan.

and chartered by the Boy Scouts of America in January, 1962. Charter members are: John Argo, president; John Riherd, vice-president; Robert Clemons, secretary; Daniel Emerich, treasurer; Daniel Price, Larry Tesar, Joe Leonard, David Cleppe, Gary Henderson, E. G. Park, Dennis Etheredge and Dick Lamb. Adult leaders for the group are Carroll Miner and Kenneth Fisher.

At present there is one troop of Boy Scouts under the supervision of Don Musgrave and Ralph Penrose. This is Troop 91 of Belle Plaine.—Arleen Storm, John Riherd and Don Musgrave.

#### **Belle Plaine Commerce Club**

The history of the Belle Plaine Commercial Club is unique. Its creation

was due to the work of Evangelist Fordyce who came to the city on an entirely different mission, that of inducing the churches to make common cause and cooperate in a friendly spirit. When the results of this cooperation were observed the example suggested the cooperation of business interests. The work was tentative; there was no suggestion of permanency: there was no intention to accomplish wonders. The immediate work at hand was a simple matter that had not received attention . . . the erection of more hitching posts. That chore finished, the need for a general clean-up day was observed. The clubwomen's help was enlisted with great success. In order to maintain cleanliness it was necessary to sprinkle streets and that task was accomplished.

Being interested in streets led to an effort to secure the location of the transcontinental auto route which had been routed four miles away. Efforts

were successful to bring the road here and the club began to feel more confident of its survival. It helped to establish the creamery. Private persons promoted the Reliance Brick and Tile Works but the club pushed its promotion. The club campaigned for extension of water mains and building of sewers. It was instrumental in the formation of the Belle Plaine Improvement Co., with a capital of \$50,000 organized to build much needed houses. A Good Roads Club was formed when the club sent Rev. Dilman Smith to the first good roads convention. The club promoted electroliers for the business district, promoted the building of the new high school in 1912, the paving of streets, and the Semi-Centennial in 1912 when some of the members were: J. C. Milner, Dr. C. J. Snitkay, O. C. Burrows, W. A. Mall, J. F. Miller, Louis Grossman, G. R. Ahrens, C. B. Wilcox, H. R. Mosnat, H. H. Boyson, F. H. Henry, Solly Wert-



**A ball team of 1912.** In the open car are: Gene Palmer, D. Dickey, W. Moderwell, F. Zimmerman. In car with top: Walt Malcolm and "Shine" Miller.







# OAKHILL VIEW FARM

WE LIVE ON A KNOLL AND DEAL ON THE SQUARE!

We have a small, yet select, herd of purebred Hampshire Swine. Our herd sire, Magnificent Muscles, meets our expectations.



Registered herd of Angus Cattle. Not many, but we stress quality. Herd sire is Bellvue mere O.B.22. 3067484.

Master Cavalier 807433 C.L. — 1st Prize fall boar at the 1961 Iowa State Fair.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Fullmer and son, Larry Lee

Hickory 4-3002

Belle Plaine

## WE LIKE IT HERE!

Since 1927, we have proudly called Belle Plaine our home town. We like it here! Belle Plaine is rich in the values that make it a good place in which to live, raise children, work, have a profession or operate a business. Among our greatest assets are the vast, surrounding community of fertile farmland and the progressive, friendly people tilling the soil. Belle Plaine has much to celebrate during this, its one-hundredth anniversary.

Our Belle Plaine Anhydrous Ammonia bulk storage plant was one of the very first of such plants located in Iowa. In 1951 we applied the first 82% analysis nitrogen fertilizer ever used on farms in the Belle Plaine area. We are proud that our pioneering role and experience as distributors and applicators have earned for us the recognition of being "Old Timers" in the Anhydrous Ammonia business.

**Belle Plaine Ammonia Supply Co.**

WAYNE CONRAD, Owner-Operator

Hickory 4-2043

Belle Plaine







heim, P. R. Muench, S. L. Van Scoy, Rev. Dilman Smith, Dr. George Blanche, W. R. Blossom, W. P. Herring, Dr. F. B. Collins, W. A. Butzloff, L. E. Malcolm and J. A. Wheeler, the latter eight being members of the Good Roads Club.

The present Belle Plaine Commerce Club is believed to have been organized February 2, 1928.

Since that time the Commerce Club has backed many projects for the civic and financial welfare of the community. Many business promotions have received financial and material help from the Commerce Club. One of its most recent and successful business promotions has been "Crazy Days" during late summer. All celebrations are given the aid of the club and the present Centennial celebration has found the Commerce Club sharing the work of its planning and production. The Club still takes an active part in promoting better streets and roads for the city and is active in an attempt to attract industry to the city. Present officers are Bob Hadenfeldt, president; Paul Nielsen, vice-president; Wilfred Drahos, treasurer, and Dick Conaway, secretary. — Bob Hadenfeldt.

#### Belle Plaine Rotary Club

"Service above self—he profits most who serves best." For 57 years this has been the slogan of Rotary International and for 43 years the slogan of Belle Plaine's pioneer service club.

The Belle Plaine Rotary Club received its charter from Rotary International on November 1, 1919. It was sponsored by the Cedar Rapids Rotary Club which at that time was headed by Luther Brewer, publisher of the Cedar Rapids Republican. It has been said

that Rotary International was not optimistic about chartering the new club in a city of less than 5,000 population, for it was believed that Rotary was possible only in the larger cities of the world. It remained for Belle Plaine (and since then thousands of other small cities) to prove this theory wrong.

There were 19 charter members of the new club: Dr. C. J. Snitkay (physician), Howard A. Tenby (auto dealer), J. C. Milner (real estate), Dr. C. W. Grauel (dentist), W. A. Montgomery (farmer), Solly Wertheim (clothier), James Park (general contractor), George R. Ahrens (banker), C. W. Burnham (coal and wood dealer), O. C. Burrows (publisher), R. W. Hemkin (jeweler), F. H. Henry (lumber dealer), Will P. Herring (hotel proprietor), C. S. Scrimgeour (attorney), C. A. Sweet (fire insurance), Rev. Robert Tipton (clergyman), and Jesse L. Driscoll (undertaker). Of these 19, all are now deceased except Dr. Grauel who is living in Colorado, R. W. Hemkin who is living in Arizona, Rev. Robert Tipton who is living in New Jersey and C. A. Sweet who still lives in Belle Plaine.

The first officers were: G. R. Ahrens, president; James Park, vice-president; W. C. Scrimgeour, secretary and treasurer, and Will P. Herring, sergeant-at-arms.

It is interesting to note that in the early days of the Belle Plaine club, stress was laid on attendance, especially during the late '20's and early '30's when Will P. Herring reigned as secretary-treasurer. During that period district governors often sponsored attendance contests among the various clubs in Iowa, and on two occasions Belle

Plaine was the winner, once winning a bronze plaque and another time a set of flags representing the countries in which Rotary existed.

Originally meetings were held on Tuesday noon, with the first one being held in the dining room of the Herring Cottage. When the Cottage closed its dining room Rotary moved to the home of Mrs. Hazel Dodd who at that time was serving meals to teachers. Mrs. Dodd, however, quit serving meals and the club was without an eating place until Mrs. Will Herring came to their rescue for a few months. Then the Commercial Cafe opened a dining room and Rotary met at the cafe. The club now meets on Monday noon at the Lincoln Cafe.

In the early days, more so than today, family picnics and ladies' nights were often held. Many of these were held in the homes and on lawns and on at least one occasion, February 22, 1928 in J. L. Driscoll's funeral chapel.

Early day minutes have disappeared, but there remain the minutes of Will P. Herring, who was secretary in the late 20's and early 30's. Herring was the "Mr. Rotary" of Belle Plaine in his day. He was a strong believer in the Republican party and classified all people in two categories—his close friends and his bitter enemies — there were no "in betweens" for Bill. His minutes were colored by his personal feelings. For example, he mentioned Frank Hauptert's classification as an auto dealer, and followed with the notation, "misclassified as auto dealer, he sells Fords." Apparently Mr. Herring had his prejudices about cars, too. Often in these minutes he wrote about importing a noted speaker



A Legion Stag held at the first permanent home of the Legion (the Emerson School Building) was the scene of the above picture. Some of those identified are: Thurm Ealy, Choppy Nichols, R. Pyburn, E. Clear, Bob Bertsen, Jerry Goodman, E. Hayek, J. Ellis, Ed Wehrman, Jess Jetitt, W. Magdefrau, Walt Malcolm, R. McCoy, K. Longnecker, G. Silver, F. Iverson, P. Letson, S. Kozik, Leonard Adams, P. Groszkruger, K. Frazell, R. Christman, N. Williams, S. Harris, J. Lahn, S. Sankot, E. Blinkensop, Dr. Foote, G. Janes, O. C. Burrows, H. Frese, V. Vitquain, G. Peterman.





# IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS



MOM DID HER BAKING LIKE THIS

... but times have changed and we  
do it for her now.

Many Styles of Bread and Pastry Baked Daily  
Danish Pastry, Wedding and Anniversary Cakes

## MOORE'S BAKERY

Since 1945

Belle Plaine







Back in 1933 when the Belle Plaine Rotary Club was 14 years old, a ladies' night was held in the banquet room above the Commercial Cafe. Guests of the evening were Rotarians and Rotary Anns from the Mt.Vernon-Lisbon Rotary Club, a club which had been sponsored by the Belle Plaine organization.



Coach Garland Lamb produced football teams at Belle Plaine that were consistent winners of the South Iowa-Cedar league. Non conference foes included clubs from such cities as Cedar Rapids, Waterloo and Newton. Here is the 1935 squad. From left, first row: Walter Haloupek, William Rusk, Darrell Ward, Ray Vaughn, Russell Phelps, Hugh Gillen, Al Schrader, Brand, Wilson Kouba; second row: Lowell Smith, manager, Elmer Kent, Whitehead, Al Froning, Bob Allee, LeRoy Burnett, William Thiessen, Bob Burrows, Don Newland, Bob Dixon, Wesley Funk, Paul Fisher, Harry McGrew, manager; back row: Harlan Peters, Challen McCune, Russell Shields, Milford Whitehead, Richard Norby, Richard Allen, "Rocky" Carl, Ralph Esshom, Robert Payton, Tom Miller, Willard Schrader and Coach Lamb.

for some occasion and ended with the notation, "anyway, the meal was good" or some similar judgment. Above all Will Herring loved Rotary and it should be noted he loved it until the end.

In 1937 one program was a question and answer affair. The moderator went around the room with his questions and, after receiving an answer, the moderator went on to the next man. Herring's turn came. He answered his question, sat down and the moderator continued. Suddenly there was a thud. The members turned around just in time to see Mr. Herring slump off his chair and onto the floor. Dr. Snitkay rushed to his side, but it was too late. Will P. Herring was dead. This was October 5, 1937. Members who knew Bill Herring were unanimous in the feeling, that had the Almighty given Will P. Herring the choice of a time and place in which to breath his last, Will would have chosen Rotary club.

Although Rotary is not political, Rotarians are not beyond the realm of politics. So it is interesting to note that among the notables to visit the

local club was James Good of Cedar Rapids, who for many years represented this Congressional District in Washington, D. C. On one such visit in January of 1920, the Rotarians pressured Congressman Good for letter car-

rier service for Belle Plaine, and received his promise that he would see to it. Carrier service was started here on October 1, 1920.

Throughout the years since November 1, 1919, the Belle Plaine Rotary Club as an organization has sponsored a number of things for the benefit of the community. Among these are: Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, the annual Chautauqua, a boy to attend the American Legion Boys State, plants at Christmas time for shut-ins, toys for under privileged children at Christmas and an annual banquet for the high school football players. In recent years in cooperation with the Iowa Crop Improvement Association, it has sponsored the Annual Five-Acre Master Corn Growers Contest. In 1961 the local contest produced the state winner, Herbert Vogel of Keystone, who had a yield of 169.23 bu. per acre. He planted a Belle Plaine product, Funk Bros. Seed Company's, Funk's G-72. Rotary also encourages its members to be active in civic affairs.

For many years the club has made it a practice to honor those to whom honor is due. Rotary has had a number of honorary members, the first of whom was Thomas Lawrence, a long-time merchant of Belle Plaine who was already an elderly man when the club was formed in 1919. For many years, just before Memorial Day, Rotary had as its guests the Civil War and Spanish-American War veterans. The minutes seem to indicate that on at least one occasion, May 27, 1930, it entertained Dr. W. A. Vincent, Frank Kirner, Frank Shurtleff, Jack Elliott and George Ringler, all Union veterans; Douglas Ealy, a Confederate veteran who had served with Troop H. 3rd Tennessee Calvary, and Charles Bistricky, Belle Plaine's last remaining Spanish-American War veteran.







# We've Gone from Tall Corn in 1929

On March 1, 1929, Our Advertisement Read:

Phone 297. Radiators and Batteries repaired, General Repairing and Battery Service. STETTLER'S GARAGE & BATTERY STATION.

You folks over there at Luzerne, and you at Chelsea, Elberon, Irving, Keystone, Hartwick, Blainstown, yes, and you folks right here in Belle Plaine; I mean each and every one of you (kids and all), don't tell me you're not reading this, cause I know better.

If you have never had your car in our place to have it repaired, your battery tested or charged, your tires fixed or new U.S. Royal Cords put on, it's too bad. I am not blaming you though — it's not your fault. I just haven't been able to coax you in yet. Now, the next time you're in town and happen to need some fixing done, drive in and try us. The very fact that we bestow upon you the honor of giving you a personal invitation to drive your car in our garage to have your brakes relined or some other repair work done

should give you a world of satisfaction. Mr. Frank Kouba, prominent implement dealer at Luzerne, sells manure spreaders and as a special sales booster he gives a cent with every one he sells but you have to use it a time or two before you get the scent.

Frank sold some farmer 12 chickens, but when crating them found one short, and having already accepted payment for the said 12 chickens, the farmer being at the grocer's at present, Frank stole the neighbor's parrot and put it in the crate, hoping he would get by with a fast one. The farmer, getting halfway home, heard something going on and looking around saw 11 chickens in a single file following him down the road, and the parrot on the back of the wagon shouting: "If any of you girls want to change your mind, you can get in and ride."

He turned around and led the procession back to town and told Frank he didn't want the chickens, as they



weren't the right kind, and probably wouldn't lay. Frank just grinned. We do a lot of work for him and he is a good booster.

But Times Have Changed . . . Today We Say:

## TRAINING GUN DOGS ALL BREEDS

For Pheasants, Ducks and Quail

*Where hard work and know how pay off. Get a world of fun and pleasure with a well trained retriever while hunting ducks—or with a pointing breed in the field on upland game.*



Also BUY, SELL and EXCHANGE  
Retrievers and Pointing Breeds only

NO PUPS PLEASE

### STETTLER TRAINING KENNELS

H. W. STETTLER, Trainer, Handler

DIAL

Home — HI 4-2267

Kennels — HI 4-2180







1928 girls' basketball team. Top row: L. Sabroe, D. LaDage, E. Sabroe, D. Kouba; middle row: O. Wentz, H. Swain, Martha Peterman (center) Gertrude Yeager (coach), L. Cerny, A. House, R. Schoening; front: Lavonne Chvala (forward), Lucille Walton (guard), Dorethea Ringler (captain), Lillian Weed (guard), Marjorie Dolak (forward).

The club sends its president-elect to the Rotary International convention when it is held in the United States. On two occasions, in 1925 and again in 1952, its delegates traveled to foreign countries. The first time was when O. C. Burrows attended the convention in Toronto, Canada, and the second time was when Mr. and Mrs. James Murphy and Mr. and Mrs. Walter McCrory attended the convention at Mexico City, Mexico.

Although Belle Plaine was one of the first small cities to have a Rotary Club, the local club has been one of the most active in the district. This year at the annual spring conference held at Storm Lake, the club was honored by having one of its oldest members, John R. Burrows, named as governor of the 597th District of Rotary International. This is not only an honor to the Belle Plaine Club, but to John as well, for he has been one of the club's hardest working and most active members. He is a past president of the club, and the only member who has kept a 100% attendance record throughout his years of membership.

The present officers are: Richard Wright, president; Gay Argo, vice-president, and Russell Hecht, secretary-treasurer. On July 1, Argo will take the gavel as president.

We started this history with Rotary's motto. We close it with Rotary's Four Way test:

- First . . . Is it the truth?
- Second . . . Is it fair to all concerned?
- Third . . . Will it build good will for our business and better friendships for our people?
- Fourth . . . Will it be profitable for all concerned?—R. O. Burrows, Sr.

**Belle Plaine Lions Club**  
The Belle Plaine Lions became a part of Lions International on April 21, 1947.

There were 25 charter members. W. H. Magdefrau was the club's first president, and Lyle G. Woods was the first secretary-treasurer.

Since its formation, the local Lions club has been active in many civic affairs. They have done considerable work for the blind and many members have pledged their eyes to the "Iowa Lions Eye Bank" after their death so that "others may see" through corneal transplants.

For several years the Lions have sponsored Midget and Pee-Wee baseball in Belle Plaine, a program designed for boys aged nine through fifteen.

The Lions have sponsored several minstrel shows, a variety show, and have held light-bulb and broom sales to raise money to help carry out their programs. The club is very grateful to the citizens of Belle Plaine and surrounding territory for the cooperation they have received on fund-raising activities.

The Belle Plaine Lions Club has been instrumental in spreading Lionism throughout this area by sponsoring new Lions Clubs at Dysart, Blainstown and Victor.

At the present time there are 40 members in the local club and the president is Frank Hlavacek. The club's motto is "We Serve."—Cal Fullmer.

**Junior Chamber of Commerce**  
Seven young men became interested in a Junior Chamber of Commerce organization in Belle Plaine and on April 24, 1952, Michael Bevins, R. O. Burrows, Jr., Joseph Drahos, James Formanek, Steven Malcolm, William Nichols and Richard Wright met with officers of the Young Men's Bureau of Cedar Rapids. Charter night was held June 5, 1952,



Belle Plaine Lions Club was chartered in 1947. Back row, left to right: Leonard Fisher, Lynn Dankle, Bob Christman, Walter DuToit, Art Bird, E. R. Ehlen, Dr. J. P. Foote, Bill Holland, Don Hunt, Elmer Janes, Al Lahn, Willis Magdefrau, president; front row: Chal Winders, Lyle Woods, Bill Pyburn, Grant Silver, Milo Stok, Raleigh Johnson, Karl Longnecker, Earl Park, Fred Grantham, Mrs. Willis Magdefrau, seated.





# OUR HOME TOWN

Belle Plaine has been our home for the greater part of the last half of this century. In our twenty-six years in business handling Timken Heating and Air Conditioning Equipment, Frigid-aire Appliances, Shellane Bottled Gas, Water Softeners, Radios, Television Sets, Record Players, and Records, Small Appliances, and Gift Ware, we have made a large circle of friends. These friendships are the most precious possessions we have.



This building was the only one left standing after the fire of July 28, 1894. We moved into this building in April, 1948, and this is still our place of business. This was first known as the Hathway building, owned for many years by Jake Harms and more recently by Harold Kelly.

A lunch room was in the basement of the building along the sidewalk. With a strong glass you can read the "Lunch Room" over the back door.

Picture was taken from top of the elevator on 9th Avenue, south side of tracks and east side of road.

This picture shows the east side of main street looking west. This is a front view of our place of business and was taken from the roof of the Guthrie Auditorium on the northeast corner of 9th Avenue and 12th Street. The picture was taken in the early winter of 1894, about five months after the fire. The top of the C. & N.W. railway depot can be seen just over the top of the store and the next largest building to the right shows the upper stories of the Burley House.



## Earl W. and Cecelia Comer





when 64 men joined the organization. Richard Wright was elected president of the Belle Plaine chapter.

In the ten years of their existence the Jaycees have completed many projects for the betterment of Belle Plaine. They have held "get out the vote" campaigns, made improvements in the South City Park, donated to Christmas baskets, held fishing derbies for children and sponsored Fourth of July celebrations. At the present time members are taking a very active part in promotion of the centennial.

This year the Jaycees have made a "city-wide survey", provided an electronic scoreboard for the football field, are promoting an oral polio vaccine project and are helping to sponsor the State Corn Picking Contest.

In March, 1962, Don O'Brien, local president, was elected one of the six state vice presidents at the Marshalltown convention.—Don Hieftje.

Chapter 17

### Here Comes The Train!

The reason for Belle Plaine's existence was the railroad. Belle Plaine grew and thrived because of the railroad. There was a time when many thought it would die because of the railroad. But because it has had the strength and will to survive, Belle Plaine will celebrate its Centennial this year.

The railroad meant a great deal to the pioneer settlers. It meant an end to the ordeal of hauling products 20 or 30 miles to be sold. It meant that mail would arrive and depart in hours instead of weeks; it brought people and products to the isolated areas. It brought a flood of settlers where before only a trickle had arrived.



Old 10-stall roundhouse with an early engine, probably in the 1870's.



Top: The Cut, east of Belle Plaine.

Bottom: View entering from the east, about 1900.

A July, 1861, Dinsmore's Railroad and Steam Navigation Guide, in the possession of Robert Sadler of this city, shows the Chicago, Iowa and Nebraska stops between Clinton and Cedar Rapids as follows: Camanche, Low Moor, Ramesa, DeWitt, Grand Mound, Calamus, Yankee River, Loudon, Onion Grove, Mechanicsville, Lisbon, Mount Vernon, Bertram and Cedar Rapids. At the latter destination, the Western Stage Coach Company took passengers to all points west. At Clinton there was a connection by ferry and bridge at Little Rock Island with the Chicago, Fulton and Iowa Railroad which had a Chicago terminal.

The original surveys of the Cedar Rapids and Missouri River Railroad were from Cedar Rapids to Sioux City but the line was finally constructed to Council Bluffs via Blairstown and Belle Plaine, so the South Slope enjoyed rail

facilities five or six years before the northern half of the county. Grants had been made in 1856 to four railroad companies to build across the state. After failing to build in the allotted time, the Iowa Central Air Line was obliged to give up an earlier grant to the Cedar Rapids and Missouri, which in time became a part of the Chicago & North Western. The first trains probably came into Belle Plaine late in 1863. In 1864 the first round house was built with four stalls along the south side of the track between Seventh and Eighth Avenues. In 1869 this site was abandoned and the ten-stall round house was built on the site now occupied by the Me Too Supermarket. In 1884 a 30-stall round house was built on the same spot.

The 70-mile line south to Muchakinnock was built in 1883 and continued in operation until 1957 and tracks were dismantled in 1958. The "pumpkin vine" saw some pretty exciting days in the years of its existence. One of the most famous towns it served was Buxton, which was at one time the largest unincorporated town in the country. It was the site of coal mines and at its peak, Buxton had a population of 6,000, mostly Negro. It boasted a six and a quarter million dollar payroll, all in gold. The "Buxton Wonders," a Negro baseball team, had a keen rivalry with



W. A. Rusk on engine No. 1814.





**1962**



**A Complete Line of**

# **BEAUTY SERVICES**

**WE NEED YOUR HEAD IN OUR BUSINESS**

CREATIVE HAIR FASHIONS FOR WOMEN WHO CARE

**SEVEN LOCAL SALONS READY TO SERVE YOU**

**1862**

**BEAUTY NOOK**

Lois Sherwood  
HI 4-2865

**FERN'S BEAUTY SHOP**

Fern Powers  
HI 4-2485

**STYLE BEAUTY SHOP**

Donna Ford  
HI 4-2968

**KING BEAUTY SALON**

Ruby Overturf  
HI 4-2083

**MARGARET'S BEAUTY SHOP**

Margaret Tatge  
HI 4-2140

**MARILYN'S BEAUTY SHOP**

Marilyn Coover  
HI 4-2257

**BETH'S BEAUTY SALON**

Beth VanHorbeck  
HI 4-2401









Last train from Hartwick to Belle Plaine, taken July 16, 1959, by Horace McLennan, who rode on that trip. Engineer was Archie Henry, Conductor was Hugh Gillen.

the Belle Plaine team and when contests took place between the two, the coal town chartered one or two special trains, took their 60-piece ragtime band and their bankrolls, and went to town!

Buxton began to decline in 1912 when a new mine was opened at Bucknell. When the demand for coal began to drop, the death knell sounded for that area. In 1927 announcement was made that the whole mining project would be dropped, and Buxton became a memory. The Belle Plaine Semi-Centennial featured a Belle Plaine-Buxton baseball game and those who remember the occasion laugh and shake their heads and comment, "Boy, you should have seen those people dance after the ball game".

As a division town between Clinton and Boone in 1894, Belle Plaine boasted a railroad payroll of over 300, and the cash value of this number of paychecks ran to over \$300,000 annually.

In 1901, the line north (Iowa and Minnesota Division of the Chicago & North Western Railway) through Irving was built and it continues to operate to the present day, although on a reduced scale.

Belle Plaine was the division point for the Eastern Iowa Division and the Iowa and Minnesota Division. These included Clinton to Boone, Ames to Des Moines, Jewell Junction Line, Clinton Anamosa Line, Stanwood Tipton Line and Belle Plaine to Buxton, and Belle Plaine to Sanborn. In 1897 division headquarters moved to Boone, but in 1910 the headquarters moved back, along with the accounting division, which made a greater concentration of railway employees than ever before. Thirty trains a day ran on the north-south line and 50 a day on the main line. There were 45 freight crews alone in Belle Plaine. In the early 20's these headquarters were again moved out of Belle Plaine, and since that time, the number of railway employees has steadily diminished until today there are probably less than 60 where there once were 500. By 1955, changeover to diesel engines was completed and in 1960 all passenger service on the North West-

tern was discontinued. The era of the puffing, smoking, chugging trains was over. One has only to gather a few railroad men together to witness the friendly camaraderie which was a part of life when they worked together and relaxed together. Memories of the days when farmers and children along the right-of-way waved to the friendly engineer and crew, and had that greeting returned, are still cherished by countless people who remember the days when the railroad was king in Belle Plaine.

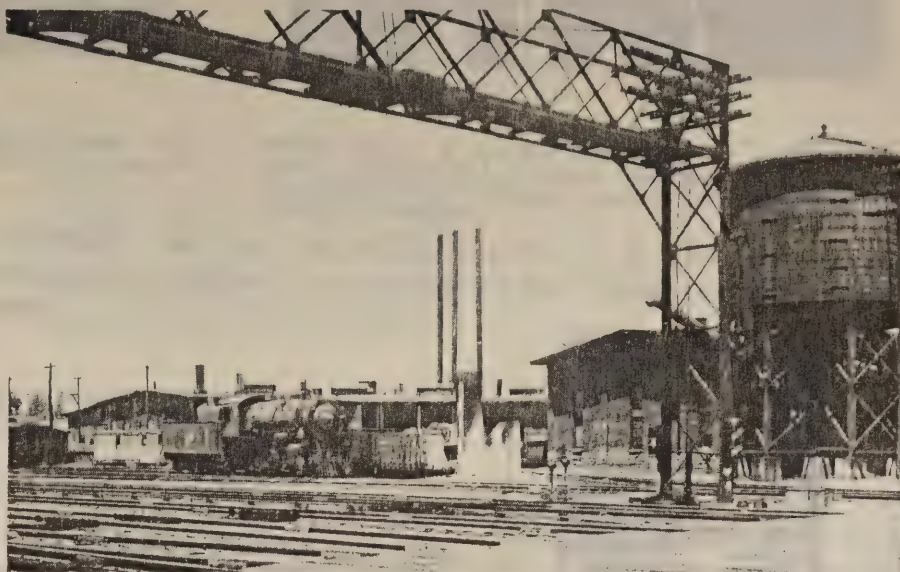
#### Railroad Labor Unions

More than 20 individual labor unions represent employees of various crafts and classifications in matters dealing with wage rates and working condi-



View of the yards from the west, probably around 1900.

tions. For many years there were members of most of these unions em-



Top: 1923 View of the yards from the Seventh Avenue crossing.

Bottom: This is how the depot areas used to look. Remember the tower at the crossing (upper right corner)?

**THIS PAGE SPONSORED BY BROTHERHOOD OF RAILROAD TRAINMEN**





# Our Founder and Sons . . .



## YESTERDAY

Early picture of E. D. Funk, Sr., and his four sons. L-R: Mr. Funk, Lafayette, Paul, Theodore, and E. D. Funk, Jr.

E. D. FUNK, Sr., BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

by the agricultural techniques he learned in Europe - - - organized the Funk Family to carry on extensive work in seed improvement.



## TODAY

Recent picture of the four sons with R. J. Laible in the center. Left to right: Lafayette, Secretary; Paul, Director; R. J. Laible, Vice President; Theodore, Treasurer, and E. D. Funk, Jr., President.

## OVER HALF CENTURY OF PROGRESS

1892: FUNK'S 90 DAY CORN . . . A cross between an improved early corn "Pride of the North" from Minnesota and a Funk's early selection. In no sense a hybrid as we know hybrids today, Funk's 90-Day established the principle of combining unrelated strains as a step in improvement. This blasted the belief that seed corn was no good when shipped more than overnight from the site where it was grown.

1902: Funk Bros. Seed Co. Incorporated.

1903: First experiments in inbreeding by making hand pollinations. By 1907 the company had tested over 20,000 individual ears of corn.

1907: Funk's Yellow Dent . . . The Wonder of Wonders in the World of Corn. This was a result of improved selecting techniques.

1915: Dr. James "Jim" Holbert, a young Purdue graduate, became associated with Funk Bros. Seed Co. and was given the life assignment "to breed a better strain of corn".

1922: Funk's Pure Line Double Cross 250 . . . an early double cross hybrid which became the leading seed corn of the company.



Dr. James "Jim" Holbert, outstanding contributor to the development of hybrid corn. Born July 18, 1890. Died February 7, 1957.



Dr. Earl Sieveking, Manager of Hybrid Corn Division for Funk Bros. Seed Co. and Associates, joined the company in 1928.



Funk Bros. Seed Co.  
Belle Plaine, Iowa









**Engine explosion, about 1925.**

ployed in Belle Plaine, who contributed greatly to the growth and activity of the area. At the present time, railroad activity in Belle Plaine has been materially curtailed, but many members or former members of these unions still reside in Belle Plaine and the following is but a brief outline concerning the unions which, so far as we know, still have active members here.

#### **Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen**

This union was organized in 1902. It is international in scope and has contracts covering wages and working conditions with all major railroads in the United States and Canada. The Brotherhood represents the railroad employees who construct and maintain automatic signals, train control, centralized traffic control, interlocking plants, highway crossing protection and many similar devices.

Local 43 of this Brotherhood was organized in 1915. The first local president was William C. Ford. William Shinner was first local chairman and Ira Fisher was secretary-treasurer.

In later years Mr. Fisher became an international vice president of the Brotherhood, after serving various terms as local chairman, general chairman on the Chicago & North Western Railway, trustee of Grand Lodge, Grand Lodge representative in Washington, D.C., and later in New York City. While vice president his headquarters were in

Chicago, and for a time, in Belle Plaine. He represented the Brotherhood in labor relations of all character with railroad management and various federal tribunals in all parts of the United States and Canada.—Ira Fisher.



**William Jennings Bryan in Belle Plaine, 1908.**



**Harding funeral train, G.A.R. honor guard at right, August of 1923.**



**Wreck at Ealy crossing, July of 1907.**



**R-1 engine with Charles Cox, engineer, I. F. Weed, fireman, and George Sponik.**

#### **Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees**

The Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way employees was formed in 1887 and the local Lodge 381 received its charter in 1918, with A. B. Cramer, president; Joe Zimmerman, vice president, and A. G. Hall, secretary-treasurer. Two charter members are still living, A. B. Cramer and Joe Peck, Jr. Present officers are: Charles Formanek, Keith Long and Sam Zimmerman.

This group of railroad employees are often referred to as the "shock troops of the railroad," for it is their job to keep safe the tracks, trestles, bridges and buildings. You have often seen them putt-putting down the track on a motor car or working in groups renewing ties, placing rail, or dangling from railroad bridges and structures with paint brushes or tools in hand. The work of the maintenance of way man is hazardous. In addition to the ordinary dangers that beset the worker who uses tools and machines, he must often work in high places, on bridges, trestles and structures. Usually his work is done under the hazards of train traffic on the main line, where he must keep a sharp lookout for trains, or in busy railroad yards where the switching of cars is constantly going on. The primary purpose of the organization is to safeguard and promote the interests of its members and their families, and the Brotherhood holds contracts covering wages and conditions with all Class I railroads and 98 percent of the short lines. Sam Zimmerman is a member of the Joint Protective Board of the Brotherhood for the C&NW System and is the secretary of its executive board.—Sam Zimmerman.

#### **Order of Railroad Telegraphers**

The Order of Railroad Telegraphers was formed by a group of 24 telegraphers led by A. D. Thurston. Its purpose is to unite the employees in the railroad industries engaged in the transmission or receiving of communications in the movement of trains. The membership at this time is numbered in the thousands. Older railroad employees can recall when there were at least 12 members of the telegraphers union working the clock around daily in Belle Plaine. There are now two fulltime and one two days a week telegraphers working at this point.—Joe Tague.

#### **Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen**

The Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen was organized September 23, 1883, at Oneonta, New York, and the present membership is 189,192.

Local No. 212 was organized by S. E. Wilkinson, as H. C. MaHanna Lodge, at Belle Plaine on May 4, 1886, and had 20 charter members. Present membership is 27 with Max Rusk as president,





# Then Funk's Came To Belle Plaine



Fred McCulloch — Farmer -  
Grower. Born Dec. 31, 1872,  
died Oct. 14, 1956.



Lewis L. Falck, Manager of  
Iowa-Minnesota Operations  
of Funk Bros. Seed Co.

## In 1935 Fred McCulloch

a long time friend of E. D. Funk, Sr., was sent the seed parent to produce Funk's 220L. Fred called upon Lewis L. Falck, Vo Ag Instructor of Belle Plaine High School, to do the detasseling. For the next two years these two men were Associate Producers, raising Funk's G-Hybrids.



One room school house converted to a dryer by Mr. McCulloch.



Belle Plaine Plant and office during early 40's.

## Iowa-Minnesota Operations A Reality:

1938: Lewis L. Falck started work with Funk Bros. Seed Company and began the development of the present Iowa-Minnesota Operations. During this year, 250 acres of seed were produced at Belle Plaine and hauled to Mason City, Illinois, for drying and processing.

## We Grew . . .

- 1939: Iowealth plant, Muscatine, Iowa, leased as dryer and for storage. Belle Plaine Canning Factory also leased for storage.
- 1940: Purchased Palmer Bros. Foundry, the present site of our Main plant and office building.
- 1941: Constructed elevator and dryer adjoining the main plant.
- 1944: Second dryer constructed along 11th Street between 6th and 7th avenues.
- 1946: 6,000 bushel Dryer constructed on Tom Palmer property N.E. corner of 7th Avenue and 11th Street.
- 1948: Purchased the Hemp Plant at Traer, Iowa, converting facilities to storage and drying.
- 1949: Purchased the Legion property, formerly Emerson School. Constructed first half of Dryer No. 8. Erected quonset-type warehouse on the Trueblood & Wyman property, S.W. corner of 7th Avenue and 11th Street. Also erected another quonset warehouse east of Dryer No. 8. Foundation dryer was also constructed at this time at Emerson School.

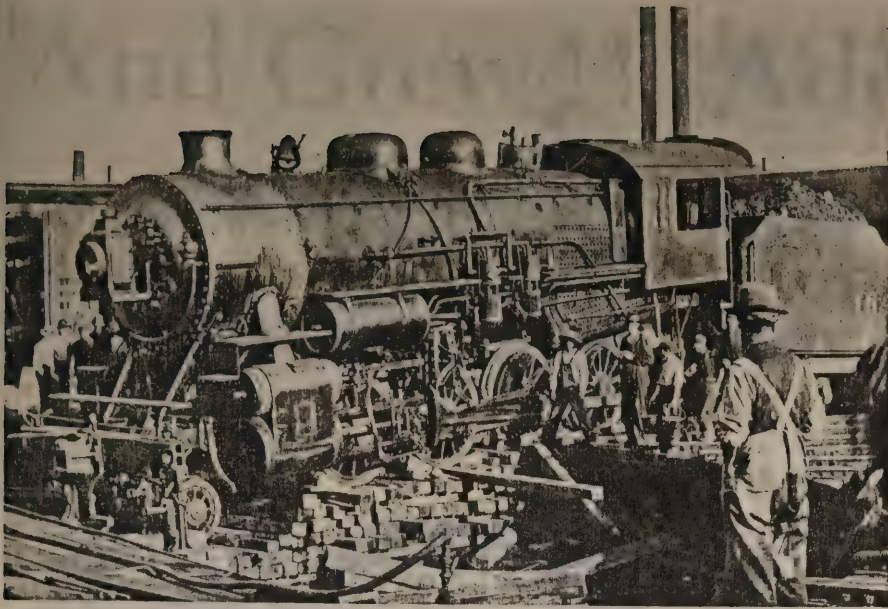


Funk Bros. Seed Co.  
Belle Plaine, Iowa









**Trouble on the turntable.**

L. A. McGrew, secretary-treasurer and Elmer L. Rusk as local chairman.

The following are retired members: Fabian Catron, Charles Chess, Herman Dierks, Joseph Drahos, Sr., Dewey E. Ealy, Leo E. Eddy, William R. Ferguson, Elmer R. Rusk, George D. Rusk, Walter Shields, Edward Tehan, Thomas F. Zimmerman. Working members are: DeLoss Allen, John Beck, Maurice Burns, Robert H. Gillen, Hugh Gillen, William A. Haloupek, Marvil McElroy, Lawrence McGregor, LeRoy McGrew, Leonard Pasler, Cletus Rusk, Max L. Rusk, Elmer L. Rusk, James Stutzman and George Wisner.—Elmer Rusk.

#### **Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers**

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers is the oldest transportation labor organization in North America. Before the date of its organization, May of 1863, locomotive engineers suffered abominable working conditions, often working a 24-hour day. The union's oldest working agreement dates back to 1875. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers was a pioneer in the field of union insurance, spearheaded the drive to reduce the working day to 16 hours, and later eight hours, and played a leading roll in obtaining the passage of the Railroad Retirement Act in 1937.

There is no longer a local union belonging to this group, due to the decrease in railroad personnel. — J. M. McCune.

#### **Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen**

Local 311, Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen of Belle Plaine, was issued its charter April 18, 1886. Some of the early members and

officers were: C. M. Blair, D. L. Hartsell, G. H. Wills, W. A. Knight, H. U. Dodd, R. Condon, William Elliott, John Henry and H. R. Richardson. In order to maintain its charter, the local group now combines with Mason City since the number of firemen and enginemen has declined greatly. Present officers are: L. E. Collum, E. E. Eyler, W. A. Rusk and Randall Williams. — Randall Williams.

#### **Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen's Auxiliary**

The Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen's Auxiliary was organized in Fort Gratiot, Michigan, January 23, 1889. On April 9, 1899, the April 149 Lodge was organized in Belle Plaine. Twenty-two names appear on the charter. At the

present time only three of these charter members are living: Stella Howland, Eva Walton and Anna Ruck. Other charter members were: Lizzie Allen, Clara E. Bromley, Jennie Brown, Lydia Donovan, Margaret Grady, Alice Hewitt, Lydia Hall, Mary Kinsell, Ollie McCune, Annie M. Morrison, Sadie Ogilvie, Julia Peregory, Mary E. Smith, Effie Thompson, May Walker, Jennie M. Wright, Laura E. Wright, Mary Wright and Ethel W. Yerian.

Grand Lodge 50-year pins for continuous membership have been awarded to Margaret Grady, Mollie Walton, Josie Reese, Besse Hall, Anna McKee, Mabel Benner, Emily Smith and Mary Sullivan.—Mabel Benner.

#### **The Chicago & North Western Club**

The Chicago & North Western Club was organized during World War I with 100 members. At present there are 70 members. The purpose of the club is mutual service. The first president was Mrs. Harry Allstrand, followed by Mrs. Margaret Sellers, Mrs. Amelia Westinghouse, Mrs. G. W. Yavorsky and Mrs. J. M. McCune. Active members of the club at the beginning were: Mesdames Harv McCune, William McPherson, Grace Schuchert, Russell Alexander, Monte Wagner, Stockwell, George Baxter, Noack, Tracy, T. B. Kelsey, Fred Ryan, George Henry, F. C. Crocker, Dell Anderson and John Sullivan.

Club projects include baskets of fruit and cards sent to the ill and donations to all worthwhile organizations in the community. During World War II monthly checks were sent to Schick hospital for recreational use. Members also knitted sweaters and made articles of clothing for servicemen.—Marian Janss.



1956 group of retired railroad men. Front row, left to right: Ed Lewis, Joe Pokorney, Jake McCune, Ben Yount, Bennett Olds, Ira Benner, Harold England, George Kuelper, Herman Dierks; back row: Art Carlson, Fay Zimmerman, Ira Weed, Fabian Catron, Sam Ealy, Rex Rusk, W. C. Lawrence. Cynthia Gillen held by Mr. Kuelper.

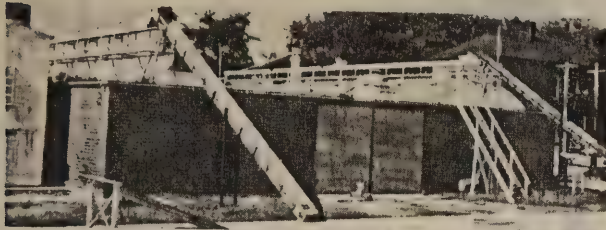




# And Grew !! Adding ...



Our Plant at Traer, Iowa



Dryer 8 located on old Emerson School Property

## More Employees - -



## More Facilities - -

1950: Added two more quonset warehouses.

1952: Second half of Dryer No. 8 constructed.

1955: Constructed another Dryer at Traer.

1959: Purchased Pirkel property along 8th Street. Constructed our new warehouse.

1960: Constructed new Dryer on Pirkel property rear of Dryer No. 8 and new warehouse.



Funk Bros. Seed Co.  
Belle Plaine, Iowa









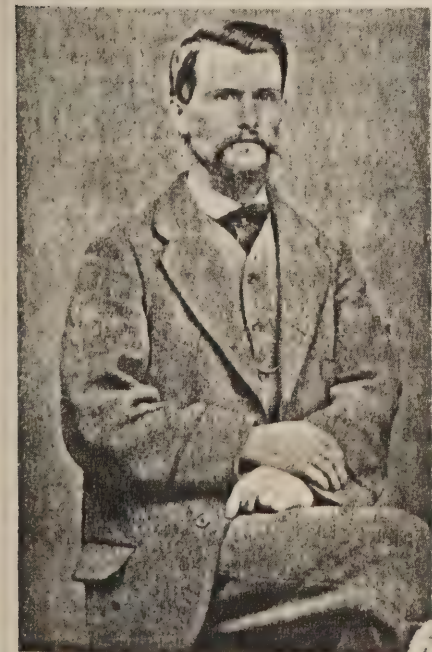
The February snowstorm of 1936 made quite a problem for the railroad.

Chapter 18

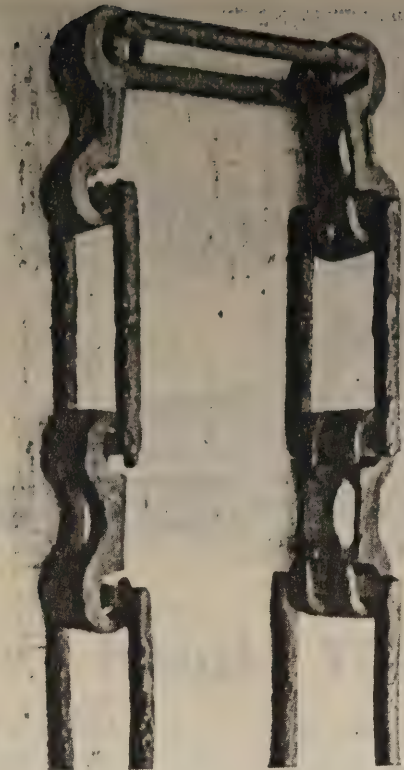
### Is This Kellar's Chain?

Every town has its "might have beens." The Kellar Brothers described in this article were a fine example of pioneer ingenuity and resourcefulness.

James Miskel Kellar was born near Columbus, Ohio, December 15, 1838. In about 1855 his parents brought the family to Iowa, finally settling south-east of Luzerne on what is now the Harry Drahos farm. Miskel started farming nearby and also did mason and carpenter work and surveying. He taught school several winter terms which was the only time many young men went to school. One of his pupils was Ann Trueblood, whom he later married on October 30, 1868. His brother, Martin Luther Kellar, preached in Irving and



J. M. Kellar



Section of chain identified as the one invented by the Kellar Brothers.

at times Miskel took over the sermon when his brother was not able. Miskel was a peaceable man who studied many scientific and technical books. I examined two that were owned by him. One was on physics and mechanics, and the other on geology. I also saw a large notebook he had filled with surveying records, three "Certificates of Merit" cards which he had awarded to Ann Trueblood for three consecutive years, and a letter he had written to the editors of a set of books in which he challenged a mechanical explanation in Volume 18. Miskel and Luther changed the spelling of their last name to avoid other Kellars getting any of their mail.

The Kellar Brothers spent most of their spare time in their father's shop experimenting and inventing. At times, when they were working on something they considered important, they would hire a man to do the farm work. They invented a reaper, and on October 8, 1867, were granted a patent. They called it the "Harvester Rake." It featured a round grain platform, a circular cutter and a rake-arm which would revolve when desired to bring the grain back to be bound by hand. They were offered \$10,000 for the patent rights but evidently thought they could make more by having it manufactured. Probably not enough were sold to even pay the inventing and patent costs, because other improved harvesters were soon on the market.

I have interviewed 22 persons from this community and have written the following to agree with what they recollect hearing about Kellar's chain. The average age of these people is 74 with three over 90.

In about 1873, Miskel and Luther Kellar were working on an improved harvester, with financial assistance from the Trueblood family. Leather belts were used to convey power, but they stretched and slipped and caused difficulties. The crude non-detachable chain known in those days had proven unsatisfactory, because it wore and broke and could only be repaired by a blacksmith.

The Kellar Brothers believed they could make an endless chain which could be repaired in the field. It is believed that the first chain they invented had open links with no hooks, connected by a closed link with hooks on each end. It worked reasonably well on the sprocket wheels of those days. However, these brothers who were now working to improve a second harvester, were quick to see that their chain needed to be improved.

Several persons interviewed describe another chain which they believe was Kellar's. It had every link open so that a sprocket wheel could be made with twice as many sprockets or cogs. This chain could take more wear and strain without running off the sprockets, and worked much better on smaller sprocket wheels. The chain had hooks which required prying open and pounding back down to repair it, but repairs could be made in the field. The story goes that this last chain was kept in the loft to prevent others from seeing it, although on occasions it may have been shown to some.

During this same time another man from Belle Plaine, by an almost unbelievable coincidence, also made detachable links. He applied on January 31, 1874, and was granted a patent September 1, 1874, on "driving-chain links" notched on one side and "constructed with coupling hooks," so that by sliding one link off the side of the next it could be detached. This malleable link which we still know today was the basis of a tremendous industrial empire.

Many people believe that Kellars were first to complete a practical chain, and that they might have done great things with it had they been able to perceive that the chain alone had enormous value.

These brothers perfected their chain to help in the development of an improved harvester. They did not receive any financial return for their chain because of the one already patented. They were much in debt and it took several years to repay these loans. In





# This Is Our 25th Year In Belle Plaine

America's  
Greatest Hybrids



More Capacity  
To Produce

Yesterday . . . we brought YOU

Funk's G-235

Funk's G-33

Funk's G-94

Funk's 546

Funk's G-66

Funk's G-114

Funk's G-212

Funk's G-37

Funk's G-29

Funk's G-55

Funk's G-169

Funk's G-16A

Today . . . we bring YOU

Funk's G-34

Funk's G-72

Funk's G-75A

Funk's G-83

These dependable favorites for Belle Plaine and surrounding area  
PLUS other new maturities for the rest of our Iowa-Minnesota territories.

Tomorrow . . . we will bring YOU

Even Greater G-Hybrids . . .

More Facilities . . .

More Employees . . .



Funk Bros. Seed Co.  
Belle Plaine, Iowa







order to gain some financial return, they made a few of these improved harvesters on which they applied their own chain, but it took them two days just to make one wheel. Soon the chain patent and other harvester patents prevented them from continuing to make harvesters.

In any case, it is certain that at least one and possibly as many as four versions of this type of chain were developed in the Belle Plaine area at that time. The chain which received the patent and its many improvements, played a vital role in industrial development around the world, the importance of which is impossible to calculate.

The Kellars soon became widely separated. Luther took his family to Oklahoma and Miskel went to Arkansas to find a home in a more moderate climate. He died of yellow fever July 11, 1883, before arrangements had been completed for his family to join him. He probably took his records and data from his inventions and experiments along. Although search was made in later years, nothing could be found.—Louis Winslow.

#### Chapter 19

### The Fourth Estate— Newspapers in Belle Plaine

#### Belle Plaine Union

Belle Plaine has been favored with many newspapers in its day. The Benton County Banner and later The Belle Plaine Transcript were forerunners of The Belle Plaine Union and they were established in 1866. Mr. Weiting, owner of The Transcript, sold the paper to W. W. Yarhan and William Nixon and thereafter the paper passed to S. S. Farrington who materially improved it. D. H. Frost was the next proprietor and he changed the name to The Belle Plaine Union. George Lee was an early editor, and Alexander Calvert had control for some seven years. Fred Brown changed the name to the Every Other Daily Union and it was published on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. H. Roy Mosnat followed Mr. Calvert and changed The Union to a semi-weekly publication. The next owner, Charles Noble, sold The Union to O. C. Burrows in 1910 and under the management of Mr. Burrows and his sons, Robert, John, and Richard, the paper has grown in circulation and has improved in every phase of its operation. O. C. Burrows died in 1952 and the paper's management passed to his sons. In the fire of 1894 The Union did not



1915 shop of the Union office. Tom Howard at Linotype, Ralph Miller and Bob Burrows, Sr., behind.

miss a day of publication although its entire plant was destroyed. Another fire in 1931 resulted in a move from the southwest corner of Eighth Avenue and Thirteenth Street to the east side of the present location. At this location The Union has expanded considerably with the addition of the latest equipment.

In 1943 The Union purchased The Gazette and since that time has been the sole newspaper in Belle Plaine. It is published weekly. Burrows Publishing Company also does a large volume of business in job printing and since the addition of pictures to its paper has

enjoyed considerable trade in that field. R. O. Burrows, Sr. is editor, John Burrows is advertising and business manager, Richard Burrows is mechanical superintendent, and R. O. Burrows, Jr., city editor.

#### Belle Plaine Review

The Belle Plaine Review was founded in October of 1874 by Sereno S. Farrington, a former owner of The Union. The newspaper enjoyed considerable popularity and was the official city paper during some of the years of its existence.

#### The Democrat Herald

The Democrat Herald was founded



The Democrat-Herald office was located in the old Opera House on Ninth Avenue. The staff about 1910 left to right: Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Slack, Helen Bach Harder, Mary Rathje, Cora Janes Deere, Florence Slack.





## MORE COMFORT with OIL HEAT



The carefully tailored-to-fit installation of every Green Colonial furnace . . . assures you of more home comfort. Every room stays just right . . . with lower fuel costs and longer trouble-free operation. See us right away.

### Green Colonial Furnaces

Sales — Service — Installation  
Oil — Gas — Coal

Free Estimates

Service on All Makes

Air Conditioning—Gutter & Spouting

American Standard  
Plumbing Fixtures

**Orlyn Wiese Plg. & Htg.**

HI 4-2097

1701 11th Ave., Belle Plaine

MANY THINGS HAVE HAPPENED  
in

**Belle Plaine's  
100 Years**

BUT ONE OF THE BEST IS



## PAUL'S DRIVE IN

WHERE YOU GET THOSE DELICIOUS  
MALTS SANDWICHES  
SHAKES FRENCH FRIES  
DRINKS CANDY & CONES

## CATTLE OILER...



● Now, rid your cattle of the costly fly problem the easy, automatic way . . . with Original Insec-Ta-Kator. This all-new cattle oiler will automatically control flies, lice, mange and ticks, help groom your cattle and boost daily gains.

Cattle free of lice, ticks and flies gain  $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. more per head daily than infested cattle. Think what this means to you . . . 25-50 EXTRA pounds per day with 100 head. In a matter of days, these extra gains will pay for the Original Insec-Ta-Kator.

Cattle can't break it. Cattle can't be bruised.

## Cedar Valley Distributing Co.

Vinton, Iowa

**BOB HOLST, Salesman**

Hickory 4-2692

Belle Plaine





in 1888 by G. M. Meyers and had its beginnings as a weekly called The Belle Plaine Herald. The publication had an unfortunate history of fires, one which took place two years after its founding, and a second when the fire of 1894 virtually destroyed the entire business district. Meyers was bought out by C. N. Whitacre who sold to C. V. Walz. Harvey Slack bought the paper in 1901 and it became the Democrat Herald. Dr. J. A. Williams had a financial interest in the paper which he relinquished and in 1908 W. P. Haley became associated with Mr. Slack. In 1919 the interests of The Herald were purchased by O. C. Burrows, owner of The Belle Plaine Union.

**Belle Plaine Gazette**

The Belle Plaine Gazette was started in the early twenties by W. G. Woods who came here from Colo. It was located in the basement of the Corn Belt building until 1943 when it was purchased by and consolidated with The Union. Lyle Woods, editor, worked for The Union for a period of years after the consolidation, as did other members of The Gazette staff.

One has only to scan early issues of any of the papers to realize that there have been tremendous changes in the newspaper field. The issues of 50 years ago are considerably more plain in language and outspoken in views than are the papers today. The news now is entirely local whereas early newspapers devoted much more space to news of national import. Advertising and pictures have changed the entire appearance of newspapers. While we may have lost a good deal of the more colorful aspects of the early newspapers we have gained much more by way of community service. The newspaper today is the center of community interest and provides services scarcely dreamed of even 50 years ago.

Chapter 20

**This Younger  
Generation  
... 60 Years Ago**

Polonius' advice to his son, Laertes, in "Hamlet" was no more sound than the advice offered by D. A. Kennedy at an Old Settler's gathering at Koszta in June of 1903, and published in The Belle Plaine Union:

"President Sullenbarger opened the exercises with a burst of eloquence which soared up among the branches of the trees, and was followed by D. A. Kennedy, who responded for the old settlers with an interesting paper of



Home of J. G. Van Meter, about 1900, 1703 Eighth Avenue.

reminiscences. Mr. Kennedy was at one time teacher of the Koszta school.

"Mr. Kennedy addressed the chair and told of his early arrival in this part of the country, his teaching experiences, businesses, marriage, Civil War enlistment, and eventual return to this part of Iowa to live in Dover, Guinnville, and eventually Belle Plaine: 'I have wandered today through the grove and over the places of many of these early scenes. The sturdy oaks and walnut trees are gone and a younger growth has taken their places. Gone also are most of the pioneer settlers and a younger generation has taken their places. In most cases the old homesteads have passed into the hands of strangers. Yet there remain a few of the old, with many of the young of that day who have grown old; little boys and girls that used to climb upon my knees are now grandparents.

"Friends, I greet you today with pleasure. It does my heart good

to clasp your hands and look into your faces and it will be a feast to talk over olden times and review the events of early life when we used the old wooden mole board plow, harrowed the ground with a wooden toothed harrow, made out of the crotch of a tree, brushed in our small grain with a brush, planted our corn with a hoe and tilled it with a single shovel plow, gathered our grain with the reaphook or cradle, thrashed it with the flail, or tramped it out with the horses or oxen. When we made lye, hominy, and pumpkin butter, and had for a rarity crab apples cooked in sorghum; when flaxbrake and scutching board were common articles of industry, when the spinning wheel, the quill wheel, and the loom were common articles used in almost every household; the cookstove a thing unknown, when there was not an oil lamp in existence; when we sat by the fireside in evenings shelling corn by hand or grating it on a tin grater to get meal for our



Early view of 1502 Fifth Avenue, former home of F. H. Emrich family.







# HRABAK'S Funeral Home

THEN

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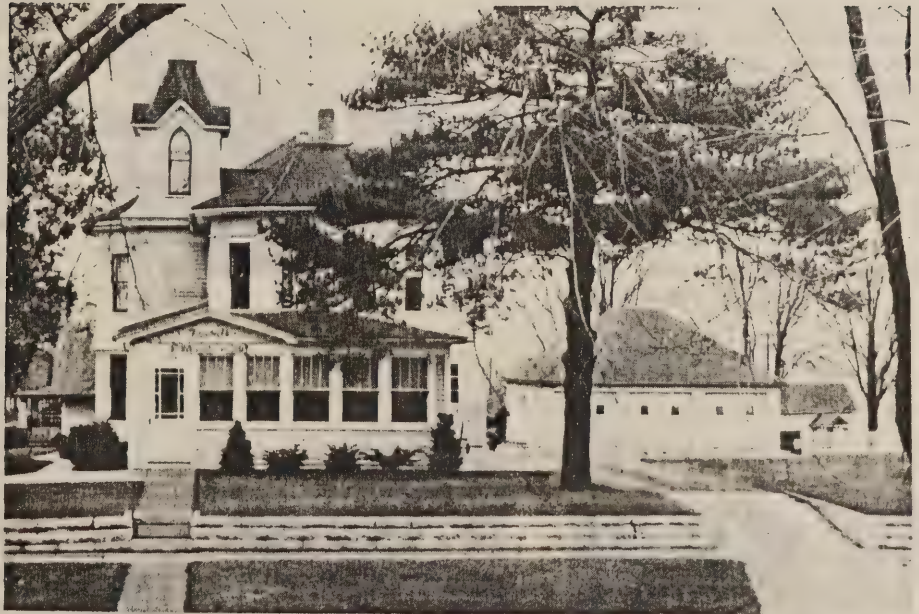
Serving all Faiths since 1934

Serving you  
24 hours daily

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DIRECTOR

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NOW







1900 view of G. M. Silver, Ray Busher and E. R. Ehlen homes.

breakfast. We parched corn, cracked nuts and told stories and riddles for our amusements, listening to the hum of the spinning wheel, or the thud of the loom, until forced to bed so that mother could sew up a rent in our shirt, or put a patch on the heel of our pants; when the railroads and telegraph were unknown, sewing machines unthought of, reapers, harvesters and threshers something that the mind of man had not conceived, when we used the old dipped tallow candle or the old rag wick with grease in a dish for a light, the earth not being tapped for oil or the lightning harnessed to do man's bidding.

"Then the wolf bayed at the cabin doors and the owl hooted from the ridge pole. Those were the days of our early lives and we were happy. Our chief sports were running, jumping and wrestling, with an occasional game of old cat or bull pen. Those were the days when people had to economize. The present generation knows but little of the lives of the pioneers of our own country; many would be surprised were I to tell you that my friend Tom Clark and myself were married in the same suit of clothes although he was married in the spring of '53 and I in the fall of '54 and I doubt if either of us has ever worn a finer suit of clothes since that time. After Tom was married he thought he had no further use for the fine clothes; therefore he sold them to me; they were good ones he had brought west with him. Well, I am glad that the present and rising generations do not have to undergo the privation that was the lot of their ancestors; but I am not glad that so many of them do not have to labor, for honest labor in my estimation, is the greatest blessing conferred on humanity. Nothing that is great or good has ever been accomplished without diligent labor,

either mental or physical, usually both combined. From the hard-handed sons and daughters of toil have all of the great men and women of the nation arisen and all of the great achievements of the world been accomplished, and upon that class of people the future prosperity and welfare of the nation depends for its perpetuation and welfare in the future.

"But little can be expected of the fashionable young lady that spends her time solely for pleasure, that lays in bed till noon and then gets up snapping and snarling at her mother because she called her too soon; and much less of the dudish young man that has no time for the advice of his parents; he calls his father the old man and his mother the old woman; his highest ambition is to puff a cigaret,



Top: View up Eighth Avenue.

Bottom: View up Ninth Avenue.

swear big oaths, loiter around baseball games, and other equally unbeneficial gatherings where he talks soft nonsense to some equally soft-headed girl. Nothing good can be expected from such a class for they have no more moral stamina in their backbones than an angleworm.

"Take my advice and don't be ashamed of honest labor. Don't be in a hurry to get away from the old home or think you know more than the old folks or that they are too hard on you. Fame has taken many a man from his forge, the anvil, the carpenter's bench or from following the plow, but she has never yet reached over a picket fence to lift a dude from his hammock; she has chosen many a woman from the toil and cares of the household to high positions of honor and usefulness, but she has never yet entered the places of ease and idleness to raise any daughter of indolence from her silken couch of laziness.

"And now, fathers and mothers, just a word for you. Do all you can for your children without making slaves of yourselves, but do not be in a hurry to rob yourselves of what you have gathered by years of toil; to start your children in life let them be the architects of their own fortunes; if you have a surplus, divide; but if not, then look to your own interest. Mr. President and old settlers, in conclusion permit me to say that I am proud for the little that I have done in connection with you in the development of this grand and magnificent country and am particularly proud for what little I have done towards the education of the boys and girls of earlier days, and more than proud of the class of men and women they have made . . . Our eyes are growing dim and our hearing dull, we are getting aged and gray, the race of life is nearly run, but we will still cherish the days that are gone when you and I were young."

The advice is just as good today as it was nearly 60 years ago.



Early view of the R. Kirkey home.





# BELLE PLAINE DOCTORS

The words "family doctor" have a meaning to every person in a small town or rural area that cannot possibly be completely understood by anyone who lives anywhere else. We, in Belle Plaine and the surrounding area, have been more than fortunate in having, from our very beginning, doctors who have served their patients with a regard that is well nigh impossible to duplicate in any other profession.

The pioneer doctors traveled by foot, horseback or buggy. The more recent doctors have had better means of transportation and far better facilities. Our confidence in these doctors and our knowledge that they cared what happened to us, have speeded more cures than all the antibiotics ever produced. Besides serving professionally, our doc-

tors have served their community in many ways: on school boards, as city officers, as advisors, as members of churches and organizations, as good citizens.

Because the historical committee felt that everyone would like to look at a picture and say, "That's OUR doctor," we tried to locate as many pictures as possible of former and present doctors. We tried to find the names of as many former doctors as could be found. We know we have missed some; it has been unintentional. Then we asked the local doctors if they would, instead of taking two pages to print centennial congratulations, allow us to proceed as above set forth. They answered in the affirmative and here is the result. Below are pictures of all

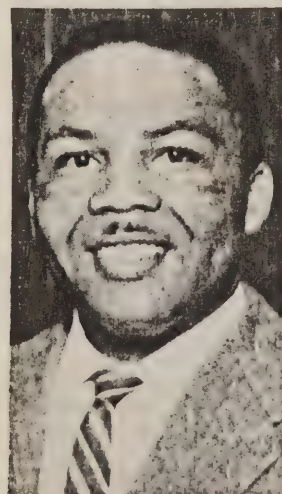
the doctors we could find, and the names of others who have practiced in this community.

Names of other doctors are: Dr. Crawford, A. L. Bryan, Dr. Lucas, J. Folbricht, A. J. Murch, R. H. Kinney, O. A. Young, A. J. Olmstead, M. C. Hammer, Eleanor Hutchinson, Dr. Car-gen, Dr. Nelson, and Dr. Barry.

Belle Plaine has sent forth some fine young men and women to practice medicine. Here are some who came from this community and have practiced in other places: Jean Box, Louise Box, Bill Yavorsky, Milton Stout, Ellwyn Brown, Dean Williams, Don O. Newland, Robert Payton, Rolly Hagen, Douglas Klink, William Janss, Arlyn Moeller, and Willis Dankle.



Dr. Norman C. Knosp



Dr. Clarence E. Douglas





We Could Have  
Written Another  
Book . . .

Whenever a group gathers to reminisce, the words, "do you remember when," really get a workout. We have covered a multitude of events that had something to do with the history of Belle Plaine. But it would take another book to tell all that we would like to tell about people and places and events and do justice to the subjects. So we are going to suggest a few of these things and let you enlarge upon them at your leisure.

Ice cream has never tasted so good as when it came from the "ice cream lady" who drove her cart along the streets and rang the bell so that children could hear it a block away and get a nickel for a cone. Nor has popcorn ever tasted as soul-satisfying as that which came from the popcorn stand that was always parked on the southwest corner of Eighth Avenue and Main Street.

The band concerts downtown provided an opportunity to stroll along Main Street, and you had to park early to get a place to watch the crowd walk by.

There was a Chinese laundry about where Blanchard's Belle Plaine Motor Supply Store is now. Youngsters liked to watch the men blow water onto the shirts and iron them . . . the Chinese disappeared in some mysterious fashion involving foulplay.

Then there was the counterfeiting scandal which involved making coins



Barbershop in the Burley House. Left to right: Roy Nichols, Jim Ealy, Scott Ealy, Milo Tyler and Harry Stone.

. . . Ira Husted (a silver plater) got the credit for making the coins. His wife ran a dressmaking shop and she continued in that work for many years after the scandal.

Maybe your memories include the dances at Firemen's Park, Blazek's, Vining, Clutier, Keystone, Victor, or at the Redman's Hall, the old Opera House, or the Z.C.B.J. Hall in Chelsea.

There have been several theaters in our city: the Lyric, Nemo, Strand, Rivola and the King. There was an assortment of opera houses . . . Greenlee's, Guthrie's, Hanson's, Zeller's. The firemen used to have some dandy min-

strel shows; Stone the barber directed a lot of them.

Belle Plaine's first Negro family held a place of respect and affection in the town. For many years Thomas Marshall was a barber; Arthur Marshall was a barber and cook and served the fire department as engine-keeper. His sister, Agnes, attended school here; his niece, Pearl, was well known here and two great-nephews, Bobby and Al Martin, attended school here.



Belle Plaine band concert on Main Street by moonlight, about 1920.



The Tune Tossers: Dick Gatrelle, "Shine" Miller, Don Gatrelle.





# BELLE PLAINE DOCTORS

## *Over The Years*



Dr. W. A. Vincent



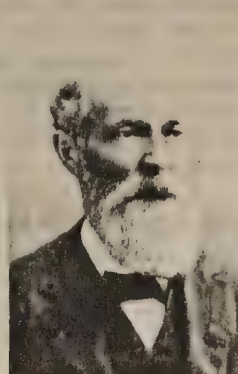
Dr. McMorris



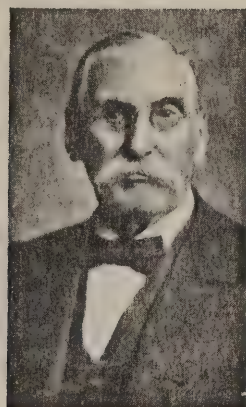
Dr. S. M. Cook



Dr. J. B. Cox



Dr. K. D. Shugart



Dr. J. Worley



Dr. Earl Cox



Dr. J. A. Williams



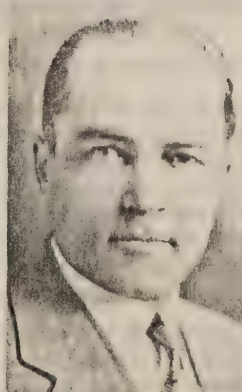
Dr. C. J. Snitkay



Dr. Herbert Klemme



Dr. Don H. Newland



Dr. G. W. Yavorsky



Dr. Don O. Newland



Dr. Nathan Williams







Minstrel show put on by the Patrician Club for the benefit of the fire department in 1914.



Reliance Brick and Tile Company on the site of Niebes Sawmill was a growing industry in 1912.



Herring Hotel, Mr. Herring at left by auto which he used to meet all the trains.



Fall Festival, 1940, Junior Class pop stand, left to right: Gene Grummer, Emlyn Niebes, Winnifred Miller, Jean Newland.

Did you dance to the music of Earl Hunt's Orchestra? Or possibly you listened to the Tune Tossers? We have had some wonderful bands and musicians. We've always been a musical town . . . as witness the many bands through the years and the fine school band we have now.

We've seen the following come and go: broom factory, cigar factory, brewery, brick and tile works, canning factory.

"Fall Festival" brings back memories of celebrations . . . if you were in the junior class, you ran a pop stand. Fourth of July parades have come and

gone by the dozens . . . and firecrackers are only something to tell about now . . . you saved your money for weeks to buy Roman candles, sky rockets, spit devils, cherry bombs, fountains, pin-wheels, ladyfingers and just plain old firecrackers.

Did you ever eat at the Burley House, Little Chicago, Rucker's, Jimmy Moore's, the Herring Cottage, the Blue Goose Inn?

Do you remember the time when you could ride to Luzerne, Hartwick, Irving and back on the train? There was a restaurant on the west side of the depot . . . and the depot itself has seen several locations: on the north side of the tracks behind Stok's, on the north side directly across from its present location.

Did you know that the big Stok house was once a hospital? Then there were hospital rooms above the Cut Rate Grocery once, and the Corn Belt Hospital, and several nursing homes through the years.

The newest doctor in town used to dash out of the office, whip his horse into a gallop, and race out of town, leaving all bystanders with the impression that he was much in demand, while once out of sight he slowed down to a walk and enjoyed the scenery and returned after a while.

Maybe you can recall when Billy Sunday lived here. He lived in the house where Mrs. Laura Wehrman now lives. He worked for Van Meter Drug and the C & N W, but never came back here after he became a famous evangelist. From the recollections of old timers, it's pretty easy to see why he didn't.

Once upon a time the words "ice cream social" meant home-made cakes, every homemaker's favorite recipe, and home-made ice cream, with more cream and eggs in it than a whole truck full of today's product has.

Remember the penny candy? It was pure torment to choose when you only had a couple of pennies and had to make a choice. There used to be a little shop where Walt Herring lives now and every youngster frequented the store going to or coming from school, and some sneaked away at recess. Then there was the Candy Kitchen, and the smell of fresh roasted peanuts at the Dees place and Pettitt's Confectionary and others.

The late O. A. ("Boge") Rucker could and did ride standing on two horses and drove Roman chariots in exhibitions around the country. Some families were in business here through many, many years: Nicholls, Malcolms, Parks Brothers, Solly Wertheim, Herrings, Cunninghams, James Herejk, George Peterman, Tom Lawrence, Henry's,







**1862 — 1962**



**YES**

We've made a few  
changes at Luzerne in  
the past few years!



... and also an alteration or two  
at Belle Plaine ... and there will be  
more in the years ahead.

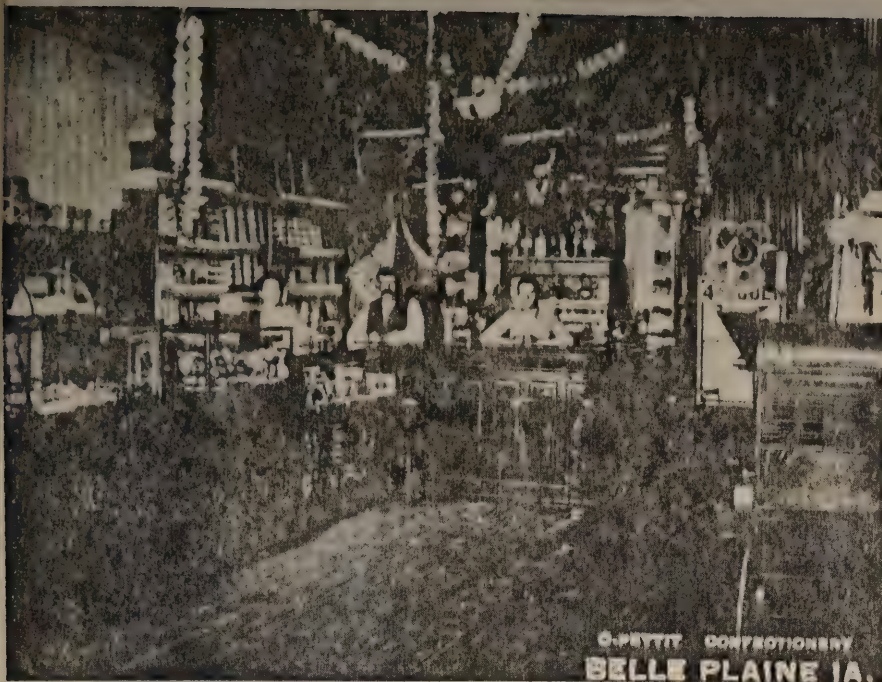
**"PROGRESS" Is Our Middle Name**

**Froning Grain & Lumber**  
Luzerne

**A. C. Froning Elevator**  
Belle Plaine







Petitt Confectionery, 1905. Left to right: Maggie Viall, Ozias Petitt, Jessa Petitt.



Red Bird, driven by Mood Carl. The horse belonged to John Rucker and was widely known for his speed and beauty.

Sweets, Blossoms and dozens of others.

The Belle Plaine Business College turned out many a secretary under the direction of Oscar Soiney. Its last location was in the upper story of Roudabush's building. The Union was located there at one time.

When we recall former teachers there is no end to the names brought up for discussion, but no one who ever had Frances Snitkay in junior high ever fails to mention her name.

Did you always get a weiner when you bought the meat for Mom at the meat market? Benda's gave them and

so did Zalesky, Dohnalek and Pete Thiessen, and others, too.

We used to follow the ice man and beg a chunk of ice on hot summer days . . . if he was in a good mood he might even chip a piece off for you.

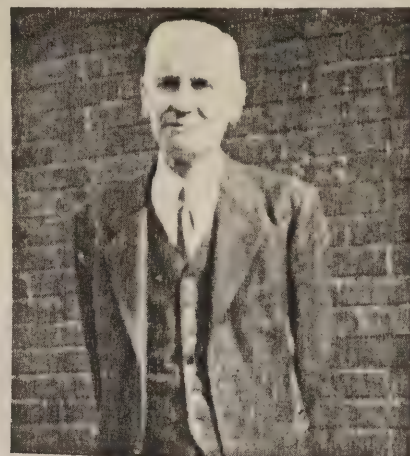
When the school burned on New Year's Day of 1921, did you have to go school at the Redman's Hall? Or perhaps in some church basement? And where did you have your school picnic? Perhaps it was in the Iowa River bluffs, or along the river by Koszta, or if you were in kindergarten was it in Ryan's

pasture where you had to go over the stile and across the "bridge of sighs?"

Did you go swimming in the river, Salt Creek, Honey Creek, or at the Marengo pool? When the first warm day came along, did you try wading in Minnie Creek?

Were you one of those who carried water to ice Eleventh Avenue so you could go down on a bob-sled? Maybe you were the daring kind who hitched rides behind cars on your sled. Or did you wrap up in the old buffalo robe for that sleigh ride?

Have you ever seen the monument at the top of the hill in Oak Hill Cemetery which marks the burial plot of Ladimir Klacel, famous Bohemian philosopher? He spent the last year of his life with Frank Zalesky who lived in the big red brick house on the northwest corner of Ninth Avenue and Eighth Street. For many years his friends and admirers came here to pay tribute to his memory.



Mr. Oscar Soiney, taken about 1942, when he operated a business college above Roudabush Produce.



Frances Snitkay, well-remembered junior high teacher, 1938.







Since 1910—

# Our Purpose Has Been To Serve Belle Plaine . . .

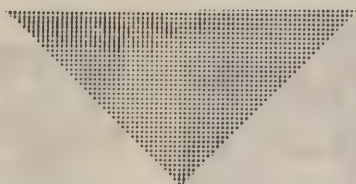


O. C. BURROWS  
1874-1952

*In an editorial in the first edition of The Union published by the Burrows family, written July 8, 1910, O. C. Burrows wrote:*

*"In the first place, The Union is going to stand by and for Belle Plaine, Benton county and Iowa. We have come among you to make our home, and we want you to feel that we are one of you; that our interests are mutual. As residents of Belle Plaine and Benton county, we all want to do what we can to help them and we can best do this by boosting."*

## We Will Continue To Serve!



Since 1910 many changes have come to Belle Plaine and to the Burrows Publishing Company. Originally, printing The Union and a small amount of job printing kept only a handful of men busy. Now, in 1962, O. C. Burrows is dead, but his sons and grandsons, and a score of employees continue on — continually expanding and enlarging the business. Particularly notable expansion has been made in the commercial printing and photography departments. But with all of the changes, the firm's guiding motto through the years and its pledge for the future has not changed — to serve Belle Plaine.



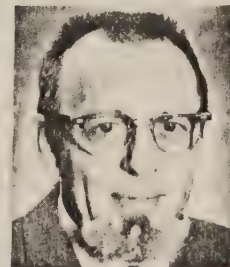
R. O. BURROWS, SR.



JOHN R. BURROWS



R. W. BURROWS



R. O. BURROWS, JR.

## BURROWS PUBLISHING CO.

*publishers of:* The Belle Plaine Union and The Benton County Star  
Founded in 1866







About 75 years ago Martin Benda ran this meat market.



Art hall, agricultural building and amphitheatre, on fairgrounds formerly located on Country Club Addition.



Ruins of high school after fire.



W. J. Guinn, age 16, son of Hyrcanus Guinn.

along Thirteenth Avenue between Fourteenth and Fifteenth Streets. Where the new Plaine Crest Nursing Home is there were two large Exhibit Halls. Cattle Barns were along Fourteenth Street down to the creek. There was a harness horse barn out from the cattle barns and a grandstand stood straight east of Fifteenth Street with a track which could still be discerned many years later when all of the buildings were gone.

It hasn't been too long since there were three banks in Belle Plaine. The First National Bank was founded in 1870 by S. S. Sweet. G. R. Ahrens became its president after the retirement of S. S. Sweet. Charles Sweet, son of S. S. Sweet, was the cashier. The Corn Belt Savings Bank opened its doors in May of 1906, with W. J. Guinn as president. Mr. Guinn was the son of Hycra-



Ladimir Klacel monument in Oak Hill Cemetery, marking grave of famous Bohemian philosopher.



Ryan's pasture with bridge across creek and stile over fence in background. Scene of many class picnics.

Did you ever go to the fairs when there was a fairground in the southwest part of town? Many people remember the Four County Fairs held where the old Wurtele place was. Those fairs were the social event of the year. There were thoroughbred horse barns





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**PROMPT DELIVERY**

**COURTEOUS SERVICE**

**ACCURATE METERED DELIVERY**

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Station Phone HI 4-2880



**DALE BEYER**

Home Phone HI 4-3397

Station Phone HI 4-2880

**BELLE PLAINE OIL CO.**

**"Distributor of Highest Quality Petroleum Products"**

**FRANK SILKBAKEN, OWNER**







Pete Jacobs' store formerly located about where Leonard's Radio & TV is now. At right is Charlie Pecenka. Taken about 1900.



One of Belle Plaine's best remembered baseball teams. Back, left to right: R. Sherwood, R. Peterson, D. England, R. Guglielmetti, W. Myers, R. Tubaugh, R. Casey, W. Henry, K. Tatman. Front: G. Schlotterbeck, G. Kaloupek, W. Rusk, M. Cronbaugh, N. Rusk, M. Rusk, D. Wagner. Picture taken in 1947. The batboy is Harold Suchy.



Airplane owned by D. H. Newland in late twenties. Left to right: Mrs. Newland, Don, Jean, Dr. Newland.

nus Guinn, pioneer settler in this area, and the father of Benson Guinn of this city. The Citizens State Bank is the only one which survived the depression.

Did you ever buy a hat at Ada Goodwin's Millinery? Or go with your mother and watch while she tried on the magnificent creations? Her shop was where Kelly's Tavern now is.

When you were a boy, did you hang around Pete Jacob's store even though cautioned by your parents that it was not a proper place for boys to loiter? Pete could talk at least seven languages and his store was a fascinating place for anyone to frequent. He lived about where the Jack & Jill Store is now.

Do you remember when Thelma Dolak won one of our beauty contests? We remember Eunice Schuchert and Yvonne Clegg winning, too; you probably remember others.

There used to be a "noon" group of golfers who grabbed a bite of lunch and then played a speedy round before going back downtown. Lots of dimes changed hands among Hancock, Sweazy, Peterman, Klink, Newland, Feddersen and all the others.

Many are the tales told about the old football games; it just depends on what year you pick out. And girls' basketball was the rage here once.

Dave Walker was the first pilot around here that we remember. He flew Dr. Newland's plane which was kept at Pettitt's pasture, near the present site of the Froning Airport.

We guess we have given you plenty of food for thought. You could add another hundred suggestions; so could anyone else; it just depends on your age and memory.

Chapter 22

## Belle Plaine Today

### Hart Memorial Library

In April of 1905, Mrs. Robert Osgood proposed that Portia Club raise money to furnish a room in the Congregational Church for a public reading room. The members gave plays, concerts, sponsored an organ recital and held food sales to raise money. By March of 1906, they had purchased a reading table, chairs, rug and shelves.

The reading room was opened July 12, 1906, with a book shower. Friends gave magazine subscriptions and a set of books was secured from the traveling library in Des Moines. Miss Alma Nichols was the first librarian.

The Belle Plaine Library Association

—Continued on page 137—





# ODD FELLOWS AND REBEKAHS



**Sincere Rebekah Degree Team  
in 1912 Semi-Centennial Parade**



**Belle Plaine Canton led by Gen. Paschall  
in 1912 Semi-Centennial Parade**

## **Belle Plaine Lodge No. 151 I.O.O.F.**

Belle Plaine Lodge No. 151 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows was instituted on July 11, 1867, and the charter granted on October 17, 1867. This lodge is a branch of the second largest social and benevolent society in the United States. The order dates back to the 18th century and is founded upon the principles of Friendship, Love and Truth.

The charter members of the Belle Plaine lodge were: E. M. Dodge, J. G. Kirkwood, S. Wyman, J. J. Dayton and J. B. Marsten. The first report of the lodge which was submitted to the Grand Lodge of Iowa on December 3, 1867, listed the following officers: J. G. Kirkwood, Noble Grand; E. J. Johnson, Vice Grand; J. B. Marsten, Treasurer; George Alexander, Recording Secretary, and Sanford Brown, Financial Treasurer.

The Belle Plaine lodge has been in its present location on Twelfth Street from its beginning, but the building has been remodeled and enlarged. The lodge owns the building and occupies the second floor. The ground floor consists of two units which are rented.

At the present time the lodge has 78 members, five of whom have been members for 50 years or more. These five are: Sam Ealy, Arthur Blinkensop, Earl Hall, Frank Hadima and William Winslow. The present officers of the lodge are: Dr. M. V. West, Noble Grand; Nelson Anderson, Vice Grand; Orie Brown, Recording Secretary; Daniel Morrison, Financial Secretary, and Fred Kithcart, Treasurer.

Other branches of the order include the following: The Rebekahs, The Encampment, The Patriarchs Militant with Ladies Auxiliaries to the Encampment and Patriarchs Militant.

The Ladies Auxiliary to the Encampment was chartered in October of 1948.

Grand Encampment No. 48, of the I.O.O.F., Belle Plaine, Iowa, received their charter on October 16, 1872. Three other towns, Marengo, Victor and Elberon, joined with the Belle Plaine lodge. At the present time there are 85 members. Officers for 1962, are: Henry Eichhorn, Chief Patriarch; Orie Brown, Scribe; Will Bennett, Financial Scribe, and Fred Kithcart, Treasurer.

## **Sincere Rebekah Lodge No. 59**

Sincere Rebekah Lodge No. 59 which was instituted and chartered in 1889 with 37 members continues to function with the primary objects and purposes of Rebekah-Odd Fellowship being its aim. These purposes are: to visit and care for the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead, assist those of its members in need, and to aid in the establishment and maintenance of Odd Fellows' homes for the aged and orphans, as well as to promote sociability among its members and jointly with the Odd Fellows.

The lodge meets regularly twice each month and is presided over by the

Noble Grand, who is assisted by 15 other officers. In the early days some of the offices were held by the brothers but that practice is seldom followed at the present time.

Through the years the lodge has had an active degree staff for initiating new members. This staff has ranged from seven to twenty-six members and has been called upon to be of service to out-of-town lodges. In 1955, the staff was chosen to confer the degree at the Rebekah Assembly at Cedar Rapids.

In the history of Sincere Rebekah Lodge we have had the honor of having two Iowa presidents, Rose Viall in 1934-35 and Lucille Shanda in 1954-55.

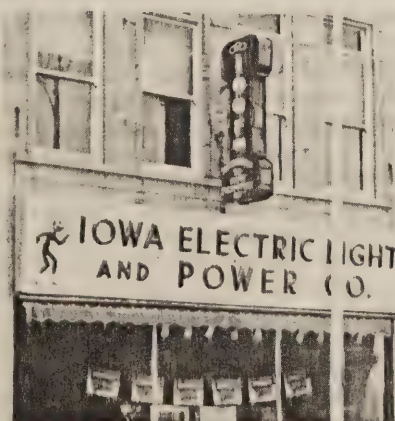
We contribute regularly and generously to the Odd Fellow Home in Mason City, as well as to local projects of the community. At various times members have sponsored charity drives such as Red Cross, Polio and Cancer. Response is made according to the needs of the time, the community and the existing circumstances.

The present membership is 153 and as long as Sincere Rebekah Lodge shall exist, we shall continue our good work in Friendship, Love and Truth.

Present Noble Grand is Marilyn Ealy.

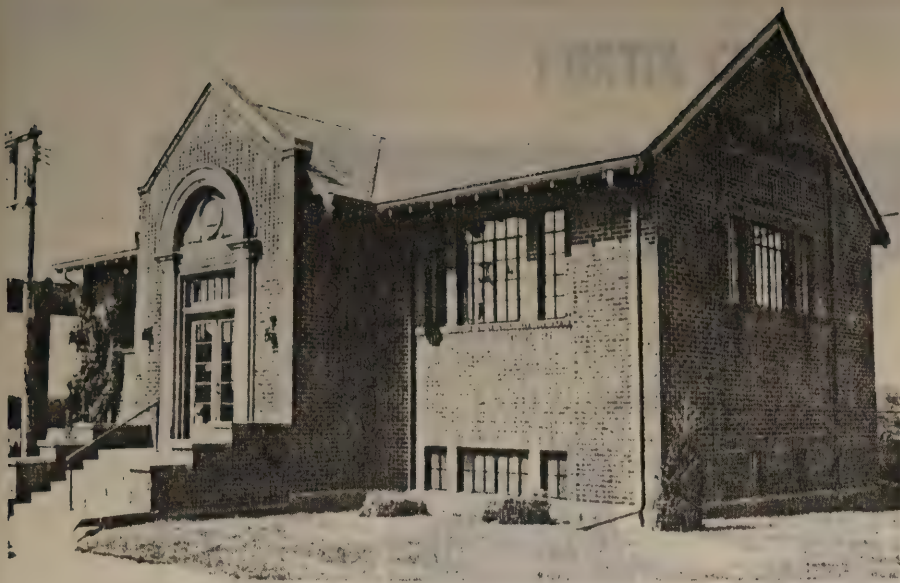
In the summer of 1912, when Almeda (Mrs. W. A.) Tippie was Noble Grand of Sincere Rebekah Lodge No. 59, a number of ladies met to make plans to raise money to lay an oak floor in the main meeting room of the hall and for other necessary improvements.

These projects were accomplished and the Circle is still meeting with an average attendance of 10 to 15. Meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday afternoons. The ladies do quilting, have a business meeting and enjoy a social hour with refreshments at the end of the afternoon.









**Hart Memorial Library.**



**City Council in 1962, left to right: Walter Mulherin, James Formanek, Elmer Rusk, Russell Hecht, Clerk Lyle Ealy, Claude Conklin.**

was formally organized in November of 1907, and a board of trustees and officers were appointed. The original officers were: Mrs. R. S. Osgood, president; Mrs. F. H. Henry, secretary; Mrs. J. E. Mosnat, treasurer, and Miss Alma Nichols, librarian.

Mrs. Solly Wertheim served as president from 1908 until 1942.

In February of 1929, the reading room moved to the upper story of the Zalesky building on Main Street. The city helped support the library, making it possible to have it open every afternoon of the week except Sunday.

In July of 1929, a bequest of \$10,000 came from Samuel S. Hart, a former citizen of Belle Plaine. A lot was purchased at the corner of Thirteenth Street and Ninth Avenue. The building progressed under the supervision of the building committee: Mrs. Solly Wertheim, Messrs. E. N. Brown, Edward F. Snyder, J. L. Driscoll and W. O. Brand. The library was dedicated on January 5, 1932, and given the name "Hart Memorial Library."

The library has grown steadily since that time. Two new book stacks have been added which give shelf space for about 2,400 additional books. The library now contains 6,000 volumes.

In 1957, the 50th anniversary was celebrated with an open house with the Portia, Athena and Sorosis Club members in charge.

In 1960 Hart Memorial Library joined the Iowa State Traveling Library and received aid from state and federal sources, a \$200 grant of reference books and assistance in cataloguing the books and training the librarian.

Mrs. Ida Rank acted as librarian for many years, followed by Mrs. Lee Martin, Mrs. Thelma Shadle and Mrs. Bess Wetherel. At the present time, Mrs. Walter Herring is the librarian. The present board of directors and officers are: Miss Evelyn Mansfield, president; Mrs. Don H. Newland, vice president; Mrs. A. W. Froning, secretary; Sam Zimmerman, treasurer. Other members are: Mrs. J. J. Strandberg, Mrs. Howard K. Thomasson, Mrs. Howard Collings-



**Henry Plumb, grandfather of Abigail Winslow, Iona Blinkensop, Horace and Waldo McLennan. Mr. Plumb came to Belle Plaine in the 1860's and had a blacksmith shop where the library now stands.**

wood, Mrs. John R. Burrows, Mrs. Walter Kollmorgen, R. O. Burrows, Jr., and Fred Grantham.

#### **The Belle Plaine Country Club**

Although a group of golfers banded together as early as 1925 to play "pasture pool" as it was called then, no formal organization was made until August 15, 1930, when the Belle Plaine Gold Club was formed. The group leased the present site from J. O. Walton and wife for 10 years for \$360 per year with an option to buy for \$10,000. In July, 1931, the Belle Plaine Country Club was incorporated for the purpose of leasing and/or purchasing land for a golf club and to build a club house. This club assumed the lease of the Gold Club. Officers were: A. L. Janss, president; Ed Snyder, secretary; W. A. Irwin, treasurer, and C. W. Burnham, vice president. The original incorporators were: A. L. Janss, O. A. Kirk, C. B. Wil-

—Continued on page 139—



**View in the thirties of the Country Club.**





## PORTIA CLUB



April, 1908, gathering of the Portia Club. Back row, left to right: Grace Brewer, Emma Zalesky, Leona Wilcoxon, Nita McCune, Nellie Sweet, Stella Zalesky, Alma Nichols. Front row: Mary Scrimgeour, Addy Firkins, Mrs. Osgood, Flo VanDike, Alice Firkins.

### Portia Club

Portia Club was organized on October 5, 1896. Mrs. Sedgewick, wife of the minister of the Congregational Church, and six young ladies, members of her Sunday School class, met with the object of obtaining a higher, broader and truer culture, and feeling the need of an organization for that purpose, agreed to form a Literary Club to be known as the Portia Club. They wrote a constitution and by-laws and decided to meet every other Monday from September to June 1, and this has continued to be the meeting day to the present time. The membership of the club was limited to 20 members. Nine new members were admitted at the next meeting. The first year American authors and current events were studied and each year a miscellaneous program has been followed. The club has studied poets, writers, art, politics, had debates, book reviews, and the last few years has had programs by outside speakers and talent from the school.

Dues were 50 cents a year and later 25 cents was paid as city federation dues. At one time the club belonged to the State Federation of Women's Clubs but withdrew when dues were raised and it was felt better use could be made of that money locally.

In 1906, when the Congregational Church was built, a room was set aside to be used as a library room, and it

was known as the Clarissa Conrad Sedgewick Reading Room, and Portia Club sponsored this project. Food sales and an organ recital were held to raise money and the club furnished shelves, a desk, reading table, a dozen chairs, and a rug for this reading room. The chairs and reading table are in use today at the present library. A book shower was held in July of 1906, and with those books and a traveling library from the library association at Des Moines, the club was able to open the reading room which has grown into the Hart Memorial Library of today. Alma Nichols was selected to be librarian and members of the club served as attendants for several years. The reading room was then open Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons and Saturday evenings. The club has continued to support the library and each year has given something to it, either books or financial assistance. For several years the club gave over \$100 and one year \$200. When the library moved into its new building the desk was purchased by Portia Club at a cost of about \$165.

On November 2, 1956, when the library observed its 50th anniversary, the Portia Club served as hostess.

Although the library has been the principal interest through the years, the club has had other projects: clothing and furnishing school supplies to a

needy high school girl for two years, Christmas baskets for needy families, canned goods to the needy, donations to fund drives, etc.

Portia Club was the means of starting Williams Park. It was through the efforts of the club that Dr. J. A. Williams gave the use of the land to be used as a park for five years and later Mrs. Williams donated the park to the city.

Many unusual parties and entertainments have been held and in 1921 Portia celebrated her 25th anniversary with a program recalling outstanding events and featuring letters from the first president and other former members. In the coming years Portia Club hopes to continue the service to the community which has highlighted its first 66 years.

Present officers and members are: Jean Malcolm, president; Beverly Wiese, vice president; Dorothy Blanchard, secretary, and Beverly Lahn, treasurer; Dosia Byers, Margaret Janss, Arlene Jensen, Thelma Johnson, Caroline Kern, Winnifred Lamb, Maude Leavell, Ruth Lethem, Winnifred Miller, Lillian Studt, Betty McGillivray, Beverly Sywassink, Gladys Groszkruger, Jean Truelson, Cecelia Wehrman, Cindy Ehlen, Frances Magdefrau. Associate members are: Ida Rank, Caroline Sweet, Dorothy McCune Stark and Goldie Malcolm.







1962 aerial view of Country Club, view to northwest, clubhouse upper center.

mowing machines were purchased and caretakers hired to mow the course and run the club house. In the early years of the Country Club, the young boys of the community were caddies and many golfers developed out of that group.

In 1940 the original lease was extended for a period of ten years, and in 1950 the present site was purchased for \$9,000. In 1955 the name became Belle Plaine Country Club and the reorganized corporation assumed all the obligations of the former corporation.

In 1955 erection of a new club house was discussed and investigated. The building was to cost \$20,750 and featured a split level arrangement so that golfers might enter the ground floor where lockers and showers were located. The club house was built and opened in the summer of 1955. Building committee members were: H. L. Malcolm, Walter Malcolm, James Murphy,

—Continued on page 141—

cox, Charles E. Hughes, F. H. Henry, E. C. Dennand, H. L. Malcolm, George S. Sweazy, W. J. Swecker, Tom Dodd, Warren Burnham, C. W. Burnham, H. J. Hartman, W. J. Herejk, W. W. Mattox, C. B. Sheets, A. F. Bender, R. W. Miller, E. F. Snyder and W. A. Irwin.

During the early 30's extensive remodeling was done on the house which was on the property and tennis courts were built with lights for playing at night. Social activities included dances, picnics and stags. Greens were sand, later cottonseed, oiled sand, and finally the present grass greens. In the early days the course had but six holes and the "mowing" was done by a herd of sheep kept on the premises. Later,



Williams Park, originally a gift of the J. A. Williams family. Shelter house at right was given by Harley Wheeler, in memory of his mother, and was designed by John Viquain.



Aerial view of South City Park. Shelter house at upper center was built by the C.C.C. men. Lighted ball field at right. Municipal pool, center. A new shelter house, a memorial to Dr. Nathan B. Williams, is being built north of the pool.





# WOMAN'S RELIEF CORPS



Seated, left to right: Hazel Kithcart, Abbie Winslow, Laura Swafford, Nora Wheeler, Josephine Chown, Alice Burns, Iona Blinkensop; second row: Elizabeth Ealy, Delpha Terrill, Emma Novak, Edith Wright, Helen Tippie, Ada Roudabush, Gladys Beyer, Emma Brown, Vlasta Weaver, Nellie Harris, Nellie Smith; third row: Orpha Hevener, Barbara Benesh, Lucille Kern, Nellie Kann, Ida Bird, Myrtle Wilson, Jenny Cerny, Rose Beck, Fern Cronbaugh, Doris Pasler, Dessie Hannen and Viola Smith.

## Woman's Relief Corps

The first Woman's Relief Corps, auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, came into being in 1878-79. These auxiliaries formed under different names and in 1883 a national organization was formed and took the above name.

The Belle Plaine group is known as the John B. Hancox Corps No. 130, and was organized November 1, 1887. There were 29 charter members and the first president was Jeannette Henderson, who had served as an army nurse in Rolla, Mo., Vicksburg, Miss., and Memphis, Tenn. The corps now has 81 members. The purpose of the corps was to care for Civil War veterans, their wives, orphans and families, and to perpetuate the memory of Civil War soldiers.

The corps is still a very active organization. It was said that when the last Civil War veteran had answered the last call all of our duties would be over. But the world is far from peace and over the years the work of the corps has increased. We will celebrate our 75th anniversary in 1962.

In 1961 we carried through the following projects: Christmas gifts for 21 children at the Annie Wittenmeyer

Home, 20 quilts pieced and finished for baby beds, Christmas box for the Children's Hospital at Iowa City, stamps, cards, fruit cake and canteen books for the Veterans' Hospital in Iowa City, jams, jellies, money, bibs and hospital gowns and slippers for the Iowa Soldiers' Home Hospital at Marshalltown, clothing, bibs, gowns and slippers for the Clinton Domiciliary, canteen book for Knoxville.

The Woman's Relief Corps is one of the few organizations which still commemorate Memorial Day by services at the cemetery and the river. We hope our organization will increase in membership and carry on the traditions which were so dear to the hearts of the Veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic. Three of our members have passed the 90-year mark and are still active in our organization, Josephine Chown, Laura Swafford and Nora Wheeler. The incumbent president is Hazel Kithcart. Local members are listed as follows: Dora Allee, Amber Allen, Gladys Bostian, Emma Brown, Loma Brown, Iona Blinkensop, Beulah Birch, Mabel Bradford, Alice Burns,

Grace Beyer, Sophia Behounek, Jennie Bloudek, Leola Birky, Ida Bird, Agnes Behounek, Gladys Beyer, Leon Bennett, Barbara Benesh, Rose Beck, Gertrude Collum, Josephine Chown, Lauretta Cronbaugh, Gertrude Crawford, Fern Cronbaugh, Jennie Cerny, Irene Cullis, Edith Dickey, Pearl Dodd, Elizabeth Ealy, Lucille Ealy, Arlene Ealy, Elosia Ealy, Jennie Fisher, Emma Graham, Beth Goodman, Nellie Harris, Orpha Hevener, Dessie Hannen, Mina Herman, Louise Hrabak, Myrtle Hecht, Vivian Johnson, Libbie Kithcart, Carrie Kennedy, Zena Kent, Nellie Kann, Lucille Kern, Evelyn Meyer, Valentine McCune, Emma Novak, Mary Peffers, Hazel Parks, Doris Pasler, Dorothy Prusha, Lottie Quigley, Ada Roudabush, Myrtle Shoemaker, Esther Share, Laura Swafford, Alberta Staffenbeal, Bessie Schuchert, Nellie Smith, Viola Smith, Thelma Siefker, Zoe Tesar, Delpha Terrill, Grace Thompson, Margaret Taylor, Helen Tippie, Amelia Tippie, Myrtle Vermace, Bessie Vratny, Abbie Winslow, Nora Wheeler, Vlasta Weaver, Albia Wandling, Edith Wright, Nancy Wright, Myrtle Wilson and Mildred Wilson.





Lewis L. Falek, Walter McCrory, Paul Groszkruger, Dr. Don H. Newland, Al Froning, Sidney C. Sankot, all of Belle Plaine, and W. A. Drake of Blairstown.

In 1960 an additional 11 acres of land were purchased and the course was remodeled to lengthen the holes and grass greens were installed. In October of 1960, those improvements were completed at a total cost of over \$16,000.

The membership at the present is 169 and the present officers are: Walter Kollmorgen, president; Lowell Jones, vice president; Carleton Groszkruger, secretary, and Berwin Throndsen, treasurer. Board members are: Charles Myers, Ray Wiese, Carleton Groszkruger and Art Sieck. Ernest Klink has the honor of being the member with the longest continuous membership. He joined the group first formed in the fall of 1925 when he came to Belle Plaine.

### Oak Hill Cemetery

The first meeting was held November 5, 1866, at the Methodist Church by the citizens of Belle Plaine with Mr. Stephans as chairman and D. C. Twogood as secretary. They proceeded to organize an association to be known as the Belle Plaine Cemetery Association.

On November 12, an election was held at J. Baker's store and a stock company with 50 shareholders at \$10 a share was formed. It was incorporated on July 10, 1867. A committee was appointed to obtain land. The committee



Oak Hill Cemetery, aerial view 1962.

reported that the "Kelly Place" could be purchased for \$1,200—\$50 down to bind the sale and \$400 when the deed was made and the balance on or before April 1, 1867. Purchase was made and a plat made of 66 blocks, each block containing a number of lots.

This association lasted until July 24, 1891, when the last shares were purchased by the Ladies Cemetery Association.

### Ladies Cemetery Association

First meeting of the Ladies Cemetery Association was held on September 6, 1889. Officers elected were: Mrs. Julia E. Mosnat, president, Lily Kostomlat-sky, treasurer, and Miss Vinnie Read, secretary. The ladies were not satisfied with the condition of graves

and the care of the cemetery. A total of 145 members were listed and each agreed to pay \$1.00.

The ladies raised money by giving dinners, plays and even ball games to buy shares held by the Belle Plaine Cemetery Association, and by September 18, 1892, this was accomplished. The name was changed to the Oak Hill Cemetery Association in 1896. The by-laws were amended January 28, 1896, and Ordinance No. 55 adopted by the City Council, City of Belle Plaine. At that time the mayor was Solly Wertheim. Four additional sections have been added to the original cemetery and at the present the officers of the association are: Mrs. Mabel Benner, president; Mrs. Vlasta Weaver, vice president; Mrs. Gertrude Walton, second vice president; Miss Ellen Carlson, treasurer; Mrs. Julia A. Brown, secretary, and Mrs. Margaret Riley, agent to sell lots.

### Belle Plaine Improvement Co., Inc.

The Belle Plaine Improvement Co., Inc., was organized to promote Belle Plaine and encourage new business. An organizational meeting was held on March 3, 1959, in the offices of Swailes & Sullivan. Thirteen men attended that meeting. They were: Paul Groszkruger, A. L. Janss, James Murphy, H. Earl Palmer, Mike Lawlor, E. W. Comer, Ed Blanchard, Walter McCrory, Earl Park, Richard Wright, Robert McCoy, Byrle Peffers and Walter Malcolm. Original officers were: Ed Blanchard, president; Walter McCrory, vice president; Paul Nielsen, secretary, and Earl Park, treasurer. Board members were: Richard Wright and A. L. Janss. The group has remained the same except that Robert McCoy has replaced A. L. Janss.

A certificate of incorporation was issued by the State of Iowa on March 17, 1959, giving permission to transact business as a group until March 17, 1979. The group incorporated for \$75,000 with the original shares set at \$1,000 per share. There have been 53 shares of stock issued.



Main Street from east, 1962.



Main Street from west, 1962.







The old swimming hole (then).



Belle Plaine Municipal pool (now).



Members of the board of the Belle Plaine Century Corporation, left to right, front row: Jack Lewis, Jean Swailes, Thelma Johnson, Ira Fisher. Back row: John Cairns, Don O'Brien, Bill Hernik, Bob Burrows, Jr., Bob Hadenfeldt, Mayor Eugene Hutchins.

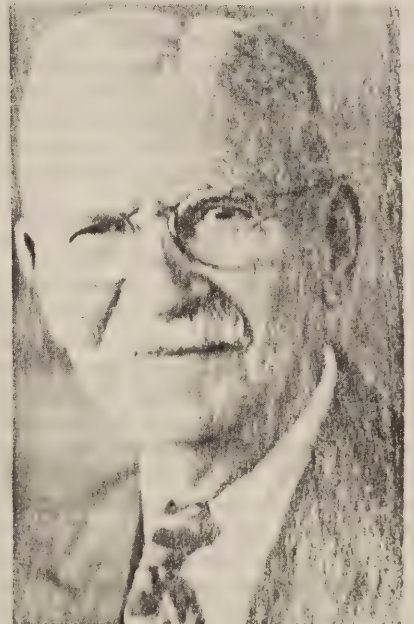


View from the southeast of farm home of David Patterson, early nurseryman and farmer, father of Charles Patterson. This house replaced the original log home and has been remodeled since then. Bernard Upah now lives on this part of the former Patterson nursery.

These are some of the transactions that have taken place in the past three years: purchase of the Wurtele Estate, 60 acres on the east edge of Belle Plaine; erection of the building housing the Belle Plaine Bowl; platting the Country Club addition for a housing development; sale of 11 acres to the Belle Plaine Country Club for enlargement of the golf course; sale of two lots to Wayne Kempf for the site of the Plaine Crest Nursing Home, and sale of a lot to Bernard Duhachek and John Chekal for the erection of the East Side Body Shop.

#### Belle Plaine Flying Club, Inc.

On June 12, 1959, the Belle Plaine Flying Club was incorporated to enable members to learn to fly. There are 12 charter members: Hugh Gillen, M. D. Dreibelbis, Denis Sullivan, William Donovan, Russell Tubaugh, Dr. John



Solly Wertheim, former mayor and long-time businessman in Belle Plaine.







Mr. Charles Patterson, one of Belle Plaine's oldest residents, was born in 1869. He is the son of David Patterson who came to this locality in 1855 and established the Iowa Valley Nursery, one of the earliest and largest in the state at the time. He supplied all kinds of trees and plants to the surrounding community. Mr. Charles Patterson helped his father with the nursery here and another in Nebraska. The farm which his grandson, Charles McLennan, farms, has been in the possession of the Patterson family for 107 years. Mr. Patterson retired from the farm to Belle Plaine in 1908. He is shown with his son-in-law, Horace McLennan, and grandson, Charles McLennan, in front of a soft maple tree which he planted on the home place some sixty years ago.



Mrs. Laura Swafford, Belle Plaine, one of Belle Plaine's oldest residents, celebrated her 93rd birthday May 24. Mrs. Swafford is the daughter of Foster Winslow, who came to the Walnut Creek area with his parents in a covered wagon in 1856, and Eliza Williams Winslow. Mrs. Swafford and her husband, Fred Swafford, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in 1949. Mr. Swafford passed away in 1951. Mrs. Swafford lives with her daughter, Mrs. George Schoening, and she has a great-great-granddaughter, Susan Marie Schild.



J. P. Henry, pioneer lumberman, who located in Belle Plaine in the 1860's.

Janss, Claude Conklin, Harold Swailes and Don Wilson, all of Belle Plaine, and Neil Schmidt of Dysart and John Grunewald and Harold Martin of Blainstown. Members own and operate their own plane which is kept at the Froning Airport northwest of the city limits.

#### Belle Plaine Athletic Association

The Belle Plaine Athletic Association was begun in 1948 and established to promote athletic events in Belle Plaine and provide a place for these contests. Since that time the town has had a semi-pro baseball team which competes on the athletic field in the South City Park. A lighted ball field with bleachers provides a site for not only the town team but Pee Wee and Midget games and high school games as well. A loud speaker system provides a commentary on these events and the voice of John Franklin is familiar to all who attend the athletic contests held there.

#### Belle Plaine Century Corporation

The Belle Plaine Century Corporation is the infant of all organizations in Belle Plaine. It is an outgrowth of the Centennial. The ten members of the board were chosen at a meeting called to organize for the celebration of the Centennial of Belle Plaine. Those members are: Robert O. Burrows, Jr., Robert Hadenfeldt, C. E. Hutchins, Ira Fisher, William Hernik, John H. Cairns, Don O'Brien, Jack Lewis, Thelma Johnson and Jean Swailes. Incorporation is at the present time in process under the above name. It is the hope of this Centennial Committee to have a corporation which may be used over a longer period of time for the betterment of Belle Plaine.







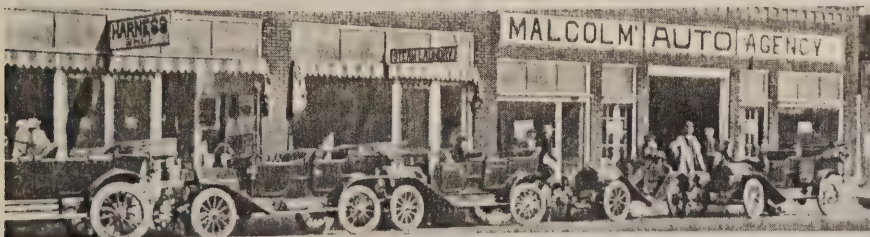
**Eighth Grade Graduation in about 1907.** Back row from left: M. McIntyre, L. Prazak, J. Lahn, R. Labins, Bessie Sperring, E. Janss, T. Ogilvie, G. Rusk, G. Rucker, W. Malcolm, L. Montgomery, A. Kollman. Middle: W. Donovan, K. Paden, C. Milner, B. Wertheim, W. Shields, N. Henry, R. Ryan, G. Kern, L. Walton, R. Weymer. Front C. Mall, B. Gumbiner, D. Snyder, R. Housman, B. Marsh, C. Dudek, W. Price, R. Steffa.



**Before school buses were in operation, in 1915 Mrs. George Lamb took David, Christine, Marjorie and Mildred to and from school each day.**



**Gay Blades . . . left to right: Lyle Gordon, Bud Housman, Harley Brainerd, Stub Conklin, Jim Cerny.**



**1920 view of east Main Street.**



**Telephone operators in 1911. Back: Leona Collins, Sadie Strawhorn, Mary Dietz. Front: Helen Back, Josephine Smith.**



**North side of Main Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues, about 1910.**



**William Fisher throwing switch to operate the Tama, Iowa, Poweshiek REA line in 1936.**







Light plant about 1903. George Schoening at left, M. E. Hunt at right. The original light plant was organized by a William Hunter who sold it to S. S. Sweet and Lew Sweet. Upon the death of the latter, one half interest was sold to G. R. Ahrens and W. A. Mall. Until 1908 service was only from dusk to midnight, after that time service was day and night. In 1914 the firm was sold to the Cedar Rapids Electric Co. which later became the Iowa Electric Light and Power Company. After that time the local plant was abandoned.



Charles Sweet, Judge Burnham, H. Lindsley after duck hunting.



Laundry on east side of Seventh Avenue between Main and Thirteenth Streets. At left is Bill Wimms, at right is Mrs. Fred M. (Rebecca) Grantham.



Rockwell Cream Station taken about 1908. Located on the east side of Tenth Avenue between Twelfth and Thirteenth Streets. It was also the site of an indoor pool and skating rink at one time. Left to right are: M. Bridge, Mr. Webb, Mr. Rockwell, unknown, W. Bridge.



The Boston Store, left to right: C. Martin, A. Norton, L. Price, M. Martin, L. Betz, G. Parks, F. Weaverling. Present location of liquor store, Clover Farm Store, Clover Leaf Feeds.

#### BELLE PLAINE

Belle of the Prairie, those first settlers called you,  
Charmed by the beauty and lay of the land.  
Here they built homes and new places of business;  
Churches and schools to keep pace with demand.

Though there were heartaches and problems a-plenty,  
All early settlers had more than their share,  
Love of the land and their pioneer village  
Lightened their burdens to what they could bear.

God rest their souls as they sleep on a hilltop,  
Couched in the faith they were proud to profess.  
They met a challenge with courage and vision;  
Their children's children must never do less.

Belle of the Prairie, the name that they gave you,  
Falls on the ear like a lovely refrain;  
Haunting, prophetic, a name to be proud of;  
Belle of the Prairie, or simply Belle Plaine.

G. A. CARLSON,  
Vinton, Iowa.







McBride blacksmith shop located between Dairy and Kelly's. Lawrence McBride went in here with his father, Charles McBride, after touring with Ringling Brothers as a blacksmith.



Ab Burns' Pool Hall, before 1920, present location of Clover Farm Store. Mr. Burns at left.



Paul Carlson Plumbing, west side of Eighth Avenue between Main and Thirteenth Streets, about 1930.



Miller Clothing, 1923. J. F. Miller and son, Dick Miller.



Belle Plaine's Police Department was on wheels in 1924. W. D. Funk.



Ben Allers and Jack Franklin of Franklin & Allers Hardware, 1929, northeast corner of Main and Seventh Avenue.



Telephone switchboard located on second floor of Reihsen Building. At right is Ella Madeson, third from right is Jennie Bloudek. The Iowa Telephone Company was the first organized in Belle Plaine. In the 1890's it was sold to the Belle Plaine Telephone Company, led by Solly Wertheim, Jacob Mosnat, Charles Blossom, Edward Nichols. It was later sold to D. C. Phillips and then to Central Iowa Telephone Co.









Girls Glee Club in 1926, back, left to right: M. Apgar, R. Rucker, C. Lamb, O. Ehler, R. Brown, E. England, N. Tappan, B. Preston. Center row: L. Dierks, G. Wariner, M. England, J. Nichols, Miss Blanch McCombs, M. Keyes, H. Keyes, W. Doxey. Front row: L. Wilson, L. Ashdown, M. Beneshek, K. Park, F. Shirley, T. Palmer, E. Thuesen, L. Leonard.



Thiessen's Meat Market about Christmas time 1906. At left is E. N. Leonard, Thiessen at right.



The Lincoln Highway going west out of Belle Plaine.



FRANK SANKOT, SR.

Frank Sankot, Sr., father of F. J. Sankot and O. B. Sankot, his only presently living sons, came from Czechoslovakia as a poor immigrant boy and became a cattle buyer who owned several large farms. He is pictured here in his buggy on the river bottom farm now owned by the Huntszingers. He was a familiar figure on Belle Plaine's Main Street. He drove his horse and buggy until 1940, when he was the only person around Belle Plaine to do so. Whenever the bells of St. Michael's ring out, as they do so pleasantly, they are a tribute to Frank Sankot and Rudy Lynch, the two people who supplied the money for their purchase.



S. R. Sweet and Charles Sweet





# THE MIXER

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MALTED MILKS

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— BELLE PLAINE —



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this community.*

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808 Eighth Ave.

Hickory 4-2172

Belle Plaine

# PURINA CHOWS

Conkey Feeds

Baby Chicks

Farm Supplies

Fertilizers

**BELLE PLAINE FEED CO.**

C. J. STUDT, Manager

13th Street

Belle Plaine



Early football enthusiasts. Back: Harry Edwards, Charley Irwin, Art Carlson; center: Art Dinnie; front: Earl Hunt, Ralph Edwards, unknown, Barney Paschall, Ed Beeh, Alonzo Palmer.



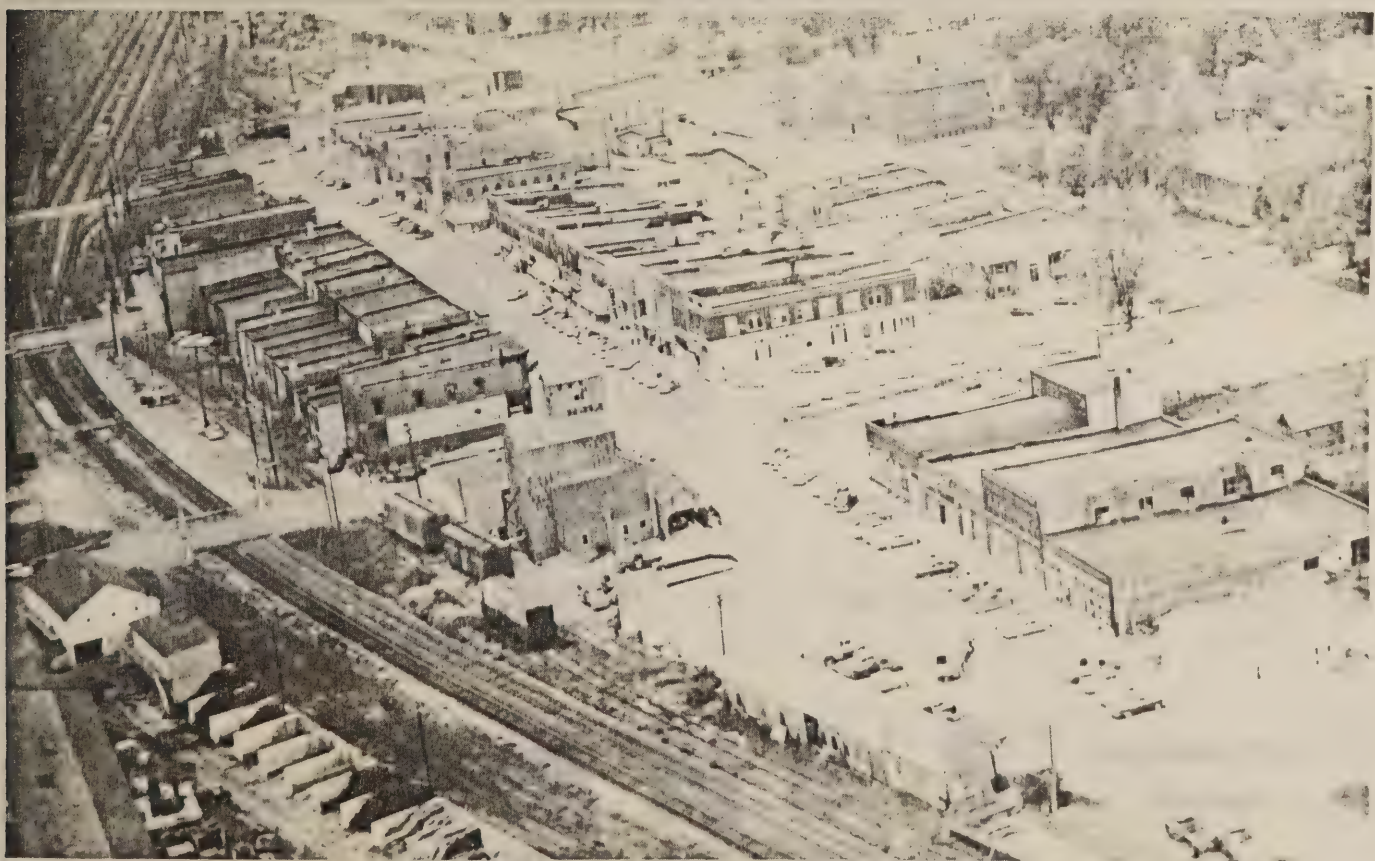
Birthday party—about 1910. Back, left to right: Frances Snitkay, Mrs. Woody Bostian, Mrs. Everett Wayman, unknown. Front: Gretchen Snitkay, unknown, Hazel Draper, unknown.







**Aerial view of Belle Plaine business district in late 1940's.**



**Aerial view of business district 1962.**





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Raymond Welch,  
Manager

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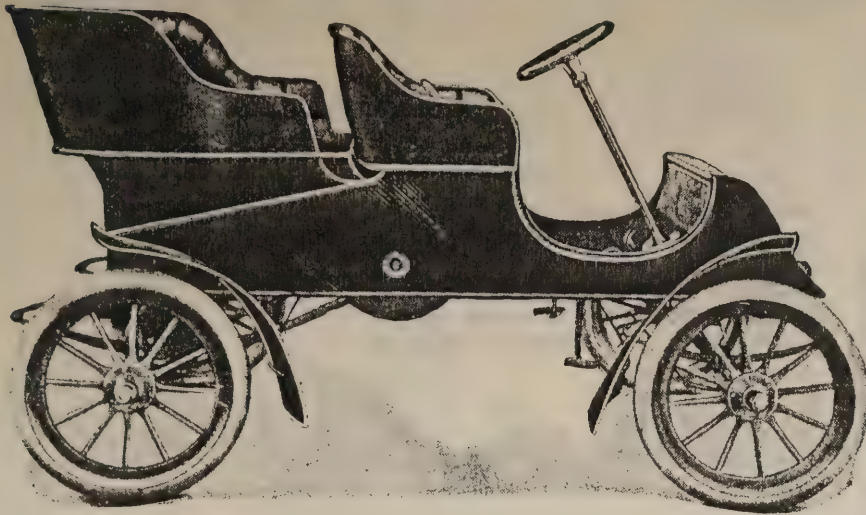




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Hickory 4-2420  
BELLE PLAINE

## 8022 OF THE ROAD



# Belle Plaine Motor Supply—

*The Motor Supply Store of Belle Plaine, Michigan*

George Preston, popular Belle Plaine antique collector, had one of the largest tasks during Belle Plaine's Centennial, lining up the July 4 parade. George has been called "Mr. Parade" on many occasions.



Nichols and Herejk Drug Store. Mr. James Herejk and Mr. Ed Nichols at right.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hughes about 1930.





# Belle Plaine Motor Supply—

*Has This Fine Staff To Serve Their Customers*



From left to right: Donald Vavroch, counterman; Beryle Blanchard, salesman; Harold Swender, machine shop foreman; Curtis A. Homire, store manager; Ed. M. Blanchard, president; Dan Morrison, machinist — lower left insert: Dorothy Jones, bookkeeper.



Complete Automotive Machine Shop Service





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Map of Belle Plaine, Iowa: Inside front cover.		

## Colophon:

Text matter for this book was set in 9-point Linotype Majestic on a 10-point slug. Picture headings are in the boldface. Chapter headings are in 8-point Spartan light and 12-point Spartan bold. Special display lines on the cover, pages 1 and 2 are in Egyptian Expanded, Comstock, Jim Crow, P. T. Barnum and Playbill, all old-time type faces.

## Acknowledgements:

The Historical Committee wishes to acknowledge our debt to all those who helped provide information and pictures for this book. Our choice of subject matter was based on availability of material. Where events and history were already well chronicled, we felt it useless to repeat. We chose to illuminate some of the lesser known areas of our history. If you disagree with our approach, we highly recommend that you start now on a sesquicentennial edition.

Editor's Note: Errors or omissions, typographical errors, misspellings and all oversights will be rectified and acknowledged made in the next Centennial Book in the year 2062. Please contact the committee at that time.





















